BING

SPRING
1999

No. 121

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

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UK	£8 per annum
Mainland Europe, including Eire	£9 per annum
USA and Canada	US $20 per annum
Australia and New Zealand	A$30 per annum
South America	£11.50 per annum

All remittances should be sent in **£ sterling** payable to 'Michael Crampton - ICC' with the exception of (a) U.S. and Canadian members who should send their remittances in U.S. dollars to F. B. Wiggins (b) Australian and New Zealand members who should pay David Currington in Australian dollars (c) Mainland European members (not Eire) who should pay Etty Gits in £ sterling. For addresses see inside front cover.

Articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to the Magazine Editor.
Other Correspondence concerning membership, non-arrival of the magazine or other aspects of the club's affairs should be sent to the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer.

BING is the official journal of the International Crosby Circle and is published in the Spring, Summer and Winter of each year. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material ©Copyright ICC 1999.

EDITORIAL

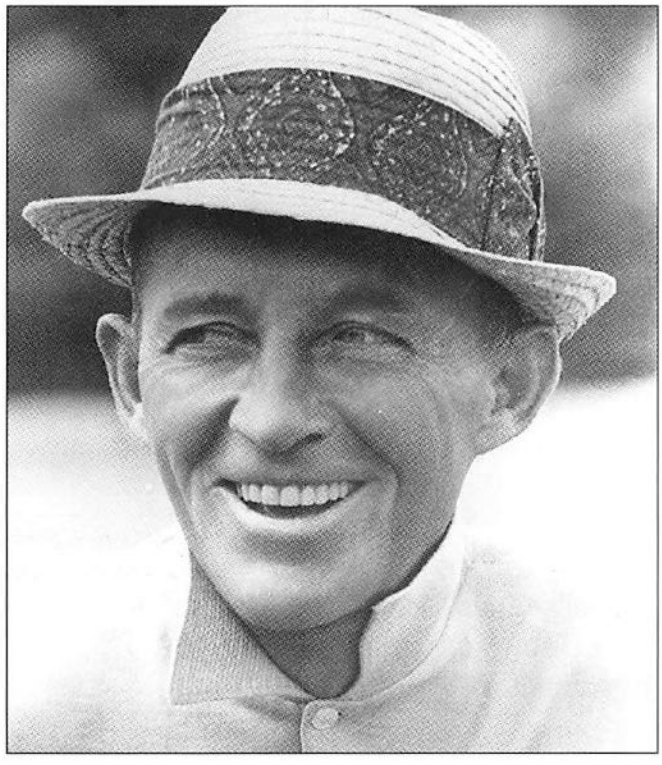
So here we are again with another edition of BING. Judging by your comments, you were all delighted with the coloured covers on our last edition and I do hope that we shall merit your approval again this time. (The phrase 'merit your approval' was used by Bing and isn't it funny how we Crosby people subconsciously re-use some of his phrases?) The covers for this edition reflect Bing in a golf setting but are separated by something like 35 years. The back cover was provided by James Dineen and our thanks go to him.

With this edition, you should receive Jim Reilly's Bing Crosby Information File which Jim has very carefully put together in recent months. This is a very useful aide memoire for all of us and also for those in the media to whom it will be supplied. There is a constant flow of incorrect stories and information about Bing and we hope that our booklet will help to stem the tide a little. The slanted view of Bing taken by some in the media is very disappointing and the latest example of this was a programme in the 'Mysteries and Scandals' series shown in the USA. We give full coverage to this in this edition through the eyes of one of the participants - Roger Osterholm - with views and opinions from others who have seen the show. The good news is that Phillip Crosby has come out in support of his father and you will find full details further on in this edition.

We were all delighted to see 'White Christmas' back in the UK charts last Christmas, an achievement that was nothing short of incredible after so many years. Our compliments to MCA for a clever marketing strategy which Jim Reilly describes more carefully in 'Keeping Track'.

In years gone by, the various Crosby clubs went their own way and seldom co-operated. It is a real pleasure to report how much co-operation now exists between the various clubs with Wayne Martin, Mark Scrimger and Greg Van Beek of BINGANG and Hobie Wilson of Bing's Friends and Collectors Society, all in regular touch with us. World-wide Crosbyana has to be united and anything the ICC can do to help any other clubs will be done. We are perfectly happy for anything contained in our magazine to be reproduced by other clubs if they wish.

In this edition, Wayne Martin makes a substantial contribution with his V-Disc Discography whilst Greg Van Beek sends us rare photographs for reproduction. Hobie Wilson's comments on the recent TV show are quoted having been taken from Steven Lewis's excellent Bing Crosby Internet Museum. To those without access to the Internet, I



should imagine that my continued enthusiasm for this media is becoming tiresome but I make no apology for this. The growth of the Internet is unparalleled and the ICC must take note and react accordingly.

I still have not got around to having Laser Discs and now I read that DVD has taken over from them. Several of our members have digital mini disc players and tell me how wonderful they are. Again I have not moved into this field either. Digital TV is something else I don't have. But the world is changing rapidly and we shall see new technology constantly changing our lives as we move into the next millennium. How about a single disc with all of Bing's career on it? Who is to say that it will not be possible in time?

We'll be back at the end of the Summer when I shall be retired from my time consuming job in a Bank and will have fresh energy to be involved in Bing matters. Lionel Pairpoint's radiography should be ready for publication later in the year and we shall probably offer this in a similar way to Fred Reynolds's "The Crosby Collection" by seeking deposits in advance. As they say, watch this space!

Malcolm Macfarlane

SECRETARY / TREASURER'S REPORT

Following the issue of our Winter journal we were pleased to be deluged with praise for the work of your management team in 1998 and long may we continue to merit your support and approval. The year has proved bountiful for Crosby enthusiasts despite lack of media support for Bing's wonderful legacy and we are indebted to all those hard working individuals who have brought us many delights on CD.

BING, our much admired journal, continues to attract new members for the club and I would like to thank John Joyce for his continuing support in ensuring that the magazine reaches members all over the world on time. Malcolm, Ron, Keith, Jim, Bert, Lionel, David, Etty and Wig deserve the highest praise for their unstinting efforts to bring us what must be the best journal of its type in the world.

New members are continuing to find us via e-mail and CD sleeve notes and many indicate by their enthusiasm for our journal and research work that they regret not finding us in earlier years. They have much catching up to do and we are pleased to welcome:-

NEW MEMBERS

ENGLAND & WALES

Mr D Davies (West Midlands), Mr B Emmings (London), Mr R W Davies (Gwent), Mr J Lumb (Leeds), Mr R A Hyden (West Midlands), Mr G Woodcock, (Cheshire), Mr T Wallace (London), Mr C Lucas (Essex), Mr C A Stewart (Cambridge), Mr M Hullah (Worcs), Mr S Gregory (Manchester), Mr N Boileau (Coventry), Mr F Phillips (Essex), Mr R Barrington (Wirral), Mr E Owen (Liverpool), Mr D Stubbs (Manchester) and Mr H Hanke (West Midlands).

IRELAND

Mr C Purcell, Mr J Heffernan, Mr B Mahon and Mr C O'Connel.

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Wig & Laura's enthusiastic recruits will be listed in the Summer edition of BING.

DONATIONS

Members have been very generous with donations for 1999 and we are grateful to all that give extra support to ICC funds. We are indebted to:-
A Lee, R McCormick, E Lawson, D Bostock, C Collindridge, J Griffiths, L Gaylor, Wm Tootle, E Swithenbank, T Page, J Bignell, B Ford, Y Bowles, A D Fisher, B Lane, D V Campkin, G J Dellasalle, S Lawrence, T Mooney, P Carpenter, P Howard, H Kirkman, M Mansley, D McNamee, J Northfield, A Smith, J Weir, H C Paul, D Butler, D Haywood, H C Ross, S Smith, K Perry, G L Robinson, E Lawson, T Wagstaff, R Adey, I Arnott, M & J Sprott, D Spong, P Henessy, K Heason, L Mills, D Kirtland, M Conroy, A Pope, S Woodford, G Patmore, B Lewis, J Tasker, R Chaplin, L Brice, F Kelly, G Chappells, B Emery, J Martin, P Monaghan, I Patience, T Slauter, M North, R Larkin, R Holder, N Morrison, J Cable, L S Grassby, F N Lloyd, G Owen, D Clarke, W Wesley, J Lord, S Crellin, P Diffley, A C Bowerman, D Hellier, F Brannigan, J Coombes, G Hooper, and Mr C J Moss,

DEATHS

We were sad to learn from Mrs Dent that her husband Douglas (of Burton Latimer) had died suddenly in August 1998. Mrs Dent told us that Douglas had always enjoyed his membership of ICC and that Bing's voice had given him great pleasure over so many years. We extend our sincere condolences to Mrs Dent and family.

CLUB PUBLICATIONS

Members can obtain the following publications from me at the prices shown below and in addition we have 3 complete sets of Fred Reynolds masterly THE CROSBY COLLECTION for sale at £65 each set plus postage and packing. (No individual books are available).

1.	BING - A DIARY OF A LIFETIME	£12
2.	THE SONGS OF BING CROSBY ON COMPACT DISC	£10.45
3.	BING CROSBY- THE ILLUSTRATED BIOGRAPHY	£13
4.	1999 ICC CALENDAR	£5
5.	BACK ISSUES OF BING	£2

Numbers available are:- 94, 95, 101, 104, 106, 107, 108, 110, 118, 119, 120.

We would be most grateful to members who support the club by purchasing any of the above stock.

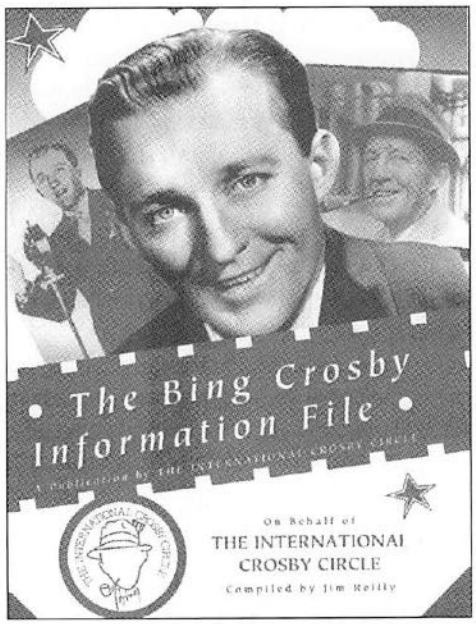
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 1999

It was gratifying that the majority of members renewed their subscription on or before 1/1/99 but as always around 80 members have not yet sent their dues and here I appeal to them to pay their 1999 fee immediately upon receipt of this journal.

THE BING CROSBY INFORMATION FILE

As Malcolm has said, if things have gone according to plan then you should now have received your copy of THE BING CROSBY INFORMATION FILE compiled by Jim Reilly on behalf of the ICC. Artwork, printing and presentation are by Michael O'Toole with help and assistance from Malcolm Macfarlane and Wig Wiggins. The file is issued free to members and we will be sending copies via our publicists to selected media presenters.

Hopefully they will be able to state or write accurate facts about Bing''s career as a result of consulting this excellent booklet.



As we come to the end of our first decade in bringing you the 'new' BING journal it is time to reflect on what we have achieved and most importantly what direction we should take in the coming decade. Perhaps it is time to issue another ICC QUESTIONNAIRE to obtain members' opinions on the way that they would like the club to be run from the year 2000 onwards. We will celebrate our 50th anniversary as a club in March 2000 and although a souvenir booklet is planned, other ideas on how we should mark this special occasion would be welcome. Will members please write to me with their views

BING CROSBY IN THE 50's (£20)

The following members have ordered, and in some cases, received their copies of the above book:

Reg Wood, Andrew Smith, Alan Chadwick, George O'Reilly, Frank Brannigan, Keith Parkinson, Derek Perkins, Gwen Harvey, Barry Whittingham, Lionel Pairpoint, Margaret Kliskey, Oisin Andrew, Ole Gun, Ian Lawrence, George Patmore, June Manton, Andy Managan, Jim Moore, Michael Winspeare, Matthew Sprott, John Teale, Ian Arnott, Trevor Wagstaff, Yvonne Bowles, Bert Morton, Bill Alexander and Frank May.

Will any member whose name is missing from the list please contact me upon receiving this magazine. Copies will be dispatched as soon as the books arrive from the USA.

THE LEON BIX BEIDERBECKE STORY (£30)

Fellow ICC member Phil Evans has written this sumptuous book and so far I have orders from Shaun Bolan (5 Copies), John Teale, Malcolm Macfarlane, Michael Crampton.

10 copies are being shipped so two remain for sale. Please contact me if you would like to receive a copy of this wonderful book.

Until Summer, happy listening and reading to all our members.

Michael Crampton

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31ST DECEMBER 1998

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Subscriptions & Donations	9189	BING (Printing)	2300
Australian advanced payment	1500	BING (Postage)	2160
Sales- Jonzo CDs	1010	Jonzo CDs	992
Sales- Calendars	1225	Calendars	715
Sales- AGM	235	Books	319
Sales- Back Issues	76	AGM	320
Sales- Diary	720	Secretarial	1402
Sales- CD Book	110	Editorial costs	147
Non ICC Cheques	209	Internet Subscription	106
Interest 1998	181	Publicity	94
		Sundries	209
Balance 31/12/97	3250	Balance 31/12/98	8941
	17705		17705

Notes:

1. The accounts do not show the full cost of printing and posting BING magazine. The costs for BING #120 will appear in the 1999 accounts.
2. The income from our Australian representative will be nil over the next two years as it is covered by the advanced payment shown.
3. Secretarial costs include postage in respect of the distribution of Jonzo CDs and books. These amounts are refunded to the ICC and appear under Subscriptions and Donations.
4. It should be noted that these accounts are a simple Income and Expenditure record and they do not show amounts owing or owed, or stock.

LETTER FROM LESLIE

I don't have too much to write about this time around so I'll keep it brief. The marvellous front cover of the last issue of BING was something to write home about and for me it made the magazine really special. Full marks to whomever decided to use that delightful shot of Bing seated at the organ. The reproduction of this photograph looks even better than it did when used as the front sleeve of the album "That's What Life Is All About"

I would like to thank all those members who have conveyed to me their kind comments relating to the "More Memories" compact disc and most have strongly expressed the wish that we will be blessed with another follow up album. I hope that if the sales of "Memories" and "More Memories" are good enough their wish will be granted through the good offices of one Alan Hodgson of Universal - MCA. I am sure that Alan will come up trumps and put a smile on the faces of our members if another CD becomes a reality. Just before Christmas I was interviewed for the BBC TV local programme "South Today" and it was nice to get a good plug in for the two albums. The interview was shown on the 23rd December.

I received a further Christmas card from that great "sound-man" Peter Reynolds depicting him and his partner at work in his studios. De-clicking paste and scissors for the necessary editing of tapes were in evidence and judging by their results they must certainly do the trick.

At the latter end of last year I had a letter from David Aylott, compiler for the Desmond Carrington' BBC Radio 2 All Time Greats' programme. A lady had written to the show asking for a particular Bing song to be played for her birthday but she did not know its title and only knew some of the lyrics. Ace Bing man Stan White was soon able to confirm the song she wanted was "If You Please" and it was subsequently played on the programme. In his programme of 7th February I was indeed very honoured to hear Desmond wish me a happy birthday over the air. For those who like to know these things I was 78 on the following Wednesday (I don't mind who knows as Desmond let out the secret). He also thanked me for keeping the name of Harry Lillis Crosby up there in lights for the up and coming generation. As you know it has always been my pleasure to promote Bing whenever I could over the years. It was a privilege for me to have known Bing and to do my little bit on his behalf. It is good to see that the ICC keeps Bing's flag flying high.

Thank you all for your Christmas cards and good wishes. My best wishes to all members until next time.

Leslie Gaylor

BING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In BING 120, Michael Crampton mentioned the help we had given Dr. Jan Adam, a journalist who was writing an article about Bing. Jan's article was published in 'Vanocni magazin Kvetu' (one of the most popular in the Czech Republic) on November 27 last and he has sent us a copy. Great to see Bing's pictures in a national magazine in Czechoslovakia. Well done Jan! Jan will have further articles about Bing published during 1999.

"BING - BIGGER THAN ELVIS AND THE BEATLES COMBINED"

John Martin has been reading 'The Good Life' by Tony Bennett and he has some comments to make.

I quote below the advice given to a very young Tony Bennett by his Uncle Dick.
"One day he came to me and said in a very serious voice. "There is one singer who has changed the face of this business. You must watch everything he does. His name is Bing Crosby and he's the boss." From that day on, I studied Bing. He is the one who has shown us all how to do it. Bing's early movies were overly dramatic, he was almost too hot for the screen. Then he started relaxing - he developed this attitude which appealed to everybody. A psychological style which got right under your skin. This was a revelation for singers, and Bing was the most popular singer of all time. Bigger than Elvis and the Beatles combined."

I think the members of the ICC will greatly appreciate Tony Bennett's acknowledgment of the debt he owes to Bing in his recent autobiography. Where I would slightly disagree with Tony is with his reference to his early movies being 'overly dramatic'. (I assume he is referring to his early singing style). Although I must admit that I prefer much of his early singing and songs to those of his mature years.

Perhaps there is no better example than his 'Down by the River' which I enjoyed seeing so much at the last Leeds event. A powerful dramatic performance which certainly 'got under my skin'. A complete contrast in style, voice and delivery. I recently heard for the first time Bing's 'How Long Will It Last' made 2 or 3 years earlier but so different - a quiet husky rendition without too much of a dramatic finish.

I read recently that the 4 most successful performers of popular songs in the Twentieth Century are Crosby, Presley, The Beatles and Sinatra. I suppose that it is inevitable that because Bing's height of supremacy was in the first half of the century, it will mean that his enormous contribution will not receive the recognition he so richly deserves.

John Martin

THE CROSBY CALENDAR 1999

The contents of this year's calendar again throw up many queries. Lionel Pairpoint attempts to answer some of them, but first let's remember which songs are featured.

Cover	What Is It?
January	I'll Be Faithful
February	Where Are You (Girl of My Dreams)
March	You've Got Ev'rything
April	It's a Lonely Trail
May	Can't We Talk It Over
June	Boo - Hoo
July	Oh, What a Thrill
August	The Glory of Love
September	Stingy
October	Sierra Sue
November	Lost in a Fog
December	In the Valley of the Moon

For some time, I've been trying to promote the idea that a calendar with some pictures of nice little pussy cats instead of song copies might be easier to deal with.

Guy Wood also wrote, "Shoo-Fly Pie And Apple Pan Dowdy" - I could have helped you there but so far, the only example of a song entitled "Stingy" (Sept) to surface is from a musical, "Toyland" which had different composers and closed, out of town, in 1908.

Side-stepping, "It's A Lonely Trail" (April) "Can't We Talk It Over" (May) and "Sierra Sue" (Oct) which are all samples from Bing's commercial catalogue, the only other number we can actually hear (unless someone is holding out on us) will be, "What Is It?" (Cover), issued on the CD, "Gus Arnheim - Echoes Of The Cocoanut Grove" and surely, the earliest audio example of a public performance by Bing. He sang "Where Are You? (Girl Of My Dreams)" (Feb) on the Cremo programme on 13th February 1932 and "Oh, What A Thrill" (July), recorded by Dick Robertson with the Ben Selvin Orchestra, was used three times, in the same series, again, in early 1932.

"Boo Hoo" (June), sung on Kraft Music Hall on two occasions in April 1937 was a No.1 hit for Guy Lombardo. "The Glory Of Love" (August), also sung twice on Kraft in 1936 was originally introduced by Rudy Vallee but became a No.1 hit for Helen Ward with the Benny Goodman Orchestra.

"Lost In A Fog" (November) was written as a theme for and introduced by the Dorsey Bros Band with vocal by Jimmy McHugh (the composer) at Ben Marden's Riviera Night Club. The Boswell Sisters sang the song on Bing's Woodbury Soap programme.

It is possible that, "I'll Be Faithful" (Jan), recorded by both Ozzie Nelson and Billy Eckstine; "You've Got Ev'rything" (Mar), recorded by Bob Crosby with the Anson Weekes Orchestra and "In The Valley Of The Moon" (Dec), featured on radio and records by Singin' Sam the Barbasol Man and also recorded by Jack Payne and Jack Hylton, could have all been sung by Bing on the Woodbury series but we still seek details of many of these programmes.

Next year, I hope to able to tell you about "Tiddles"!

Lionel Pairpoint

ASCAP's TOP CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SONGS

The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers announced the Society's 25 most-performed Christmas songs last December. We'll just reproduce the top 10 and how pleasing to see they are!

1. White Christmas
2. Santa Claus is Coming to Town.
3. The Christmas Song
4. Winter Wonderland
5. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer
6. Sleigh Ride
7. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
8. Silver Bells
9. Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!
10. Little Drummer Boy.

Yes, 'White Christmas' still top and as you can see Bing has recorded all of the top ten songs.

BING IN THE USA

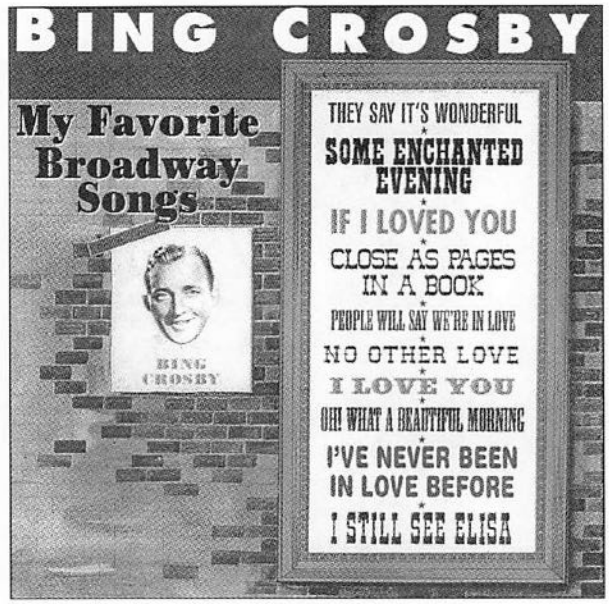
BING ON RADIO

ICC member Laurence Doyle of Hartsdale, New York has provided sensational news about a change in broadcast formats among radio stations in the New York City area that augurs extremely well for Bing. For many years, radio station WQEW-AM has been the mainstay of big band and popular music fans around New York, and it also featured some of Bing's recordings on its broadcasts from time-to-time. But at the end of 1998, WQEW announced that it was changing formats and would no longer include big band music in its schedule. Enter two sister stations in New Rochelle, New York—WVOX at 1460 AM and WRTN at 93.5 FM—which have been on the air for the past 40 years. These two stations announced that, in view of WQEW's format change, they would revise their own weekend programming in order to attract Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra fans. Beginning in January 1999, the two New Rochelle stations announced that they would feature a new "Sinatra Saturday Show" each weekend, as well as "Sunday With Bing" from noon until 6:00 p.m. every Sunday. ICC members in the New York area who can pick up WVOX-AM or WRTN-FM are requested to listen in to their new Bing program and send me their reactions and comments for the next issue of BING. Just imagine a six-hour radio program featuring Bing's recordings in 1999—it almost boggles the mind! Stay tuned for more next time.

BING'S FAVORITE BROADWAY SONGS

I have been working over the past several months with Bob Zipkin of Universal Music in Los Angeles on the production of a new compact disc in MCA's very popular budget series of "Bing's Favorite Songs", and the sixth one in this group has now been released. "BING'S FAVORITE BROADWAY SONGS" is a revised and expanded version of Decca's very first 10-inch LP (DL-5000) that originally appeared 50 years ago, if you can really believe it has been that long! Crosby collectors certainly will recognize the cover of this new CD. At my suggestion, it features a full-color reproduction of the original Decca LP cover. It is a real eye-catcher and will bring back the good old days of LP collecting for everyone. The CD tracks include six of the songs from the original LP, plus "Some Enchanted Evening" (from "SOUTH PACIFIC") and "No Other Love" (from "ME AND JULIET"), as well as two others that have not yet appeared on CD in the United States: "I've Never Been In Love Before" (from "GUYS AND DOLLS") and "I Still See Elisa" (from "PAINT YOUR WAGON").

As always with this series, Bob Zipkin and I have tried to include at least one or two tracks for the dedicated Bing collector, even though this CD is designed basically for the general public. The catalog number of this new CD set is MCAD-21140, and you should be able to find it in your local music store at $5.95, $6.95 or $7.95, depending on where you obtain a copy. There also is a cassette version, but with only eight of the songs included. This is another fine example of Universal Music's continuing support for selected reissues of Bing's better Decca recordings from the 1930's, 40's and 50's, and I trust that ICC members will welcome the opportunity to add this rather unusual CD to their collections. Such support will help assure other reissues of this kind in the future.


BING CROSBY
My Favorite Broadway Songs
BING CROSBY
THEY SAY IT'S WONDERFUL
SOME ENCHANTED EVENING
IF I LOVED YOU
CLOSE AS PAGES IN A BOOK
PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE
NO OTHER LOVE
I LOVE YOU
OH! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING
I'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE
I STILL SEE ELISA

ICC MEMBER STARS IN FOX TELEVISION SERIES

Back in the early 1960's, Hollywood produced a black-and-white television series about the wild and wacky Addams Family that was based on cartoon characters created by Charles Addams for THE NEW YORKER magazine. Although it only ran for two seasons, the original ADDAMS FAMILY became a cult favorite among television fans all over the world and is still shown in reruns to this day.

Last summer, ICC member Glenn Taranto of Los Angeles (originally from New Jersey) told me that he had been selected to play Gomez Addams (the head of the crazy family who was played by John Astin in the 1960 series) in a new version to be filmed in color in Vancouver, British Columbia for the Fox Family Channel cable television network. After quite a few years of pursuing an acting career around Hollywood, this would be Glenn's first "big break".

THE NEW ADDAMS FAMILY premiered on the Fox network in October 1998 and has quickly become the most popular Fox program and garnered favorable critical reviews. It is now being shown by Fox each Monday through Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m., with repeats also

scheduled at various times during the week. My wife, Laura, and I - plus our cat Andromeda (who knows a good TV show when she sees one)—have very much enjoyed watching THE NEW ADDAMS FAMILY over these last few months, especially the chance to see Glenn and the other cast members obviously enjoying themselves while filming this admittedly off-beat exercise in rather weird humor. And you do have to pay attention, otherwise you will miss some of their crazy antics - since it's not your typical television sitcom! Thus far, 36 episodes of the new show have been broadcast on American television, and Glenn has told me that they are under contract for a total of 65 programs, with a possible contract extension for another 25 episodes later this year. Also he said that a contract has been signed for at least 26 episodes of THE NEW ADDAMS FAMILY to be broadcast in Great Britain as well. So hopefully British ICC members also will have an opportunity to see our soon-to-be famous thespian colleague in action very soon. I would like to extend heartiest congratulations from the entire Crosby community to our fellow member on his success, and also to thank Glenn for providing the cast photograph which accompanies this article. By the way, if you are not a knowledgeable Addams Family fan, Glenn is the guy in the (awful) striped suit and (not quite so awful) mustache with a hand (named "Thing") on his shoulder. And for those who might be interested in such trivia, I have it on good authority that Glenn has just turned 40 years of age and is an enthusiastic Bing collector whenever he's not performing as Gomez Addams. Please read below for more about Glenn's latest Crosby discovery.

LIVE AT THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL IN 1936

Fellow ICC member George McCabe of Belleville, Illinois has been an admirer of Bing's career longer than most of us, and way back in the earliest days of the Kraft Music Hall, George had the enviable opportunity to attend one of Bing's broadcast performances in Hollywood.

As we know, Bing preferred not to have live audiences during his early years on radio, and the story is that the KMH producers had to sneak in warm bodies a few at a time until finally the studio was filled for each broadcast and Bing became comfortable with that situation. Fortunately, George was one of those early warm bodies. I recently asked George to write down his remembrances of the manner in which the KMH broadcasts were produced back at the beginning, so that all of us might share his unique experience. So here they are, and they provide a fascinating account of those long-lost days of "live radio". The KMH broadcast which George describes took place on July 2, 1936 according to the record books, and Bing's guests were Frances Farmer and Martha Raye, who had just finished filming "RHYTHM ON THE RANGE" with Bing and Bob Burns at Paramount Studios.

Watching the Kraft Music Hall in 1936

by George McCabe

The tickets had to be passed down from someone in the music industry. A lady who was a secretary for a producer learned that I was a Bing Crosby fan and gave me two

tickets for myself and a friend. At four o'clock on broadcast day we stood in line at the NBC studios in Hollywood. Then the usher told us to take our seats silently, and my friend and I sat approximately in the fourth row. The rehearsal was in progress and Bing was singing a song that turned out to be "Empty Saddles". Bing was surrounded by the Paul Taylor Choristers. We noticed that two young women with bright red hair were also standing in the back. They were the guests of the evening, Frances Farmer and Martha Raye. Their strange hair color, I understood, was designed to be more photogenic for the film "RHYTHM ON THE RANGE" which they had just completed. In the middle of the stage sat Jimmy Dorsey and his orchestra.

Just before air time, Bob Burns, known as the "Arkansas Traveler", addressed the audience and said, 'My name is Bob Burns and this musical instrument is a bazooka. And that fella back there in the corner is Bing Crosby." Bing tipped his cap, and continuing, Bob Burns added "Our guests tonight are Frances Farmer and Martha Raye, who are starring in the new Bing Crosby movie "RHYTHM ON THE RANGE" opening in Paramount theaters around the country". Bob Burns continued, "The Kraft people welcome you all here and ask you not to applaud, but if you find something funny, feel free to laugh. Now, when that green light turns to red, we will be on the air. And then, when the red light goes off and the green light comes on again, if you feel like applauding, please do."

When the broadcast began, Bing opened with "I'm An Old Cowhand (From the Rio Grande)", and later he sang "Empty Saddles." Bing interviewed Frances Farmer and Martha Raye sang "You'll Have To Swing It (Mr. Paganini)". This was the first time that Martha Raye was heard on national radio. Bing seemed to always open the KMH with a peppy song in those days. Bob Eberly, the vocalist with the Jimmy Dorsey band, was not allowed to sing on the KMH broadcast and just sat in a chair during the program. This was because the Kraft people who paid good money believed this was Bing's show and Bob Eberly wasn't needed. Helen O'Connell had not yet joined Jimmy Dorsey at that time.

Upon leaving the Kraft Music Hall broadcast, we passed by the Fred Astaire radio program. Fred was dancing on a small platform with the microphone close to the floor. Outside, a large crowd was standing as Bing drove away in a convertible with a driver, waving to them.

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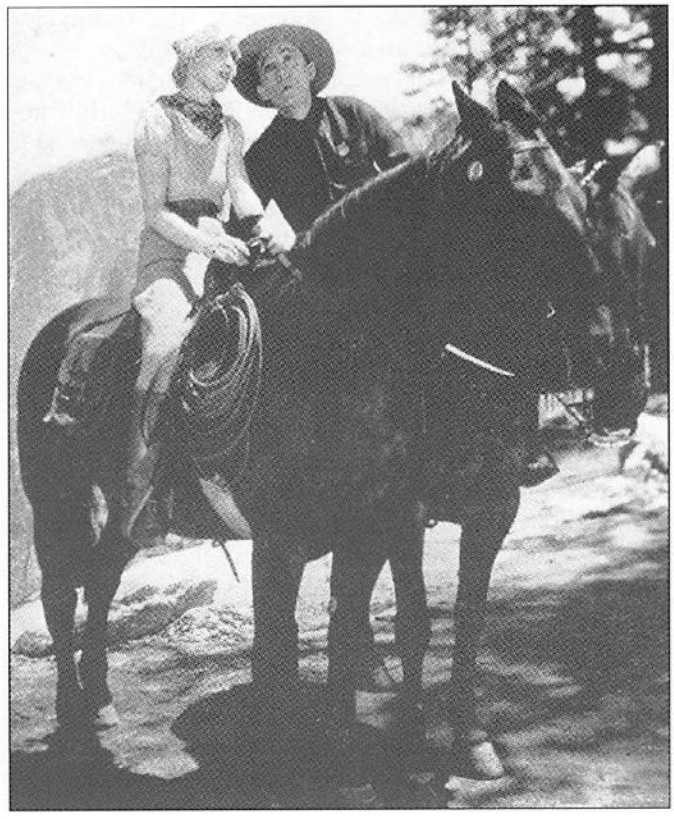
What a great experience for George over sixty years ago. And George has another great memory in his collection that the rest of us also can only envy. George told me that he definitely remembers seeing Bing's "lost" Paramount short from 1934, "JUST AN ECHO" at a theater in Los Angeles. He only recalls that, at the end of the short, Bing and his girl (Mary Kornman) were both on horseback overlooking a valley while Bing sang the title song. But at least we do have one eye witness to the fact that "JUST AN ECHO" really was shown in the theaters at that time. Now, if our Crosby movie sleuths could only turn up a full copy so that we might all see it one of these days!



Bing sings 'Just An Echo' to Mary Kornman.

A CROSBY MYSTERY - WHAT WERE THE QUESTIONS?

Just when you think you know everything about Crosby collecting, you suddenly discover something new out there, and the endless quest just keeps on going. Here's another example.

Before he went off to Vancouver to film THE NEW ADDAMS FAMILY, our friend Glenn Taranto told me he had picked up a real oddity in a second-hand record shop—a 7 inch blue vinyl single-sided disc featuring Bing that had been issued in 1966 by THE SATURDAY EVENING POST in conjunction with Bing's appearance in the 20th Century Fox remake of "STAGECOACH". The record label indicates this was an interview special with Bing for use on radio at the time of the film's release. Glenn asked if I had ever heard of such a recording. I told him I had not, nor did I remember ever reading about it in any of the Crosby magazines or books. I said I knew Bing had made various recordings of this nature from time-to-time which were used by radio stations to create the illusion that Bing actually was being interviewed by a local announcer, but that a "STAGECOACH" interview was new to me.

Since Glenn has no equipment for playing this record with him in Vancouver, he sent it to me. After transferring it to audio tape, my wife Laura spent considerable time transcribing the text onto paper, which makes for fascinating reading. The only problem is that we only have Bing's "answers" on this recording—we don't know

exactly what the "questions" were! From the information on the record label, and some indication from Bing's statements, you can guess that most of the questions had to do with Bing's performance in "STAGECOACH", and I remember that an article on this subject ran in THE SATURDAY EVENING POST some time in 1966. Perhaps this record release was tied to that article. The record label also states " ... Script Enclosed With Timing ... " but, unfortunately, it was not with the record when Glenn found it.

So here is the first BING quiz contest of 1999: What were the ten questions that went along with the responses on this recording by the Old Groaner? The Management Team will consider all entries received prior to the deadline for the Summer issue of BING for an appropriate prize(?), except members who might have the missing script in their collection are automatically disqualified. Judging will be based on originality and humor, but please no cribbing from the old SATURDAY EVENING POST article, if you don't mind!

Here are the results of Laura's most appreciated transcription of the text of Bing's "interview", with a few editorial amendments by Glenn Taranto and myself.

ANSWER NUMBER ONE
"The POST planted two very pretty female spies in the cast during the entire filming. And these girls managed to write a secret diary of just about everything that happened on and off the set. They even remembered one particularly funny flub I made!"

ANSWER NUMBER TWO
"Well! You've heard about secret diaries, but oh boy! This one is something else. The POST even did a special article on old Daddy here, all about 'the new Crosby'."

ANSWER NUMBER THREE
"The cast, oh that's wild! Everybody from Ann-Margret, to Red Buttons, to me. That's what I call courageous casting."

ANSWER NUMBER FOUR
"No, I've seen a few fellows in my time who were, as they say in Ireland, fond of the drop. So I thought I knew about how a drunk would act. Whether or not it looks like it on the screen, I couldn't say. Actually, this fellow is not a drunk in the sense that we generally accept that term. He's mellow, and he does his work. And he has lots of friends, and he just has a little appetite for the drop."

ANSWER NUMBER FIVE
"Oh, I don't think I created anything. I don't think I ever have created anything. Not even singing. I just imitated a few great stars of the past, singing. But this role, you just play what's on the page there, and do the best you can with it. It's a great screen play, the role was beautifully written. There are some great scenes and the only question was whether I was good enough to depict what was on the page."

ANSWER NUMBER SIX
"Oh, I think all three of those classifications are—(soft laugh)— Take a—a wildness in the 30's. I was certainly working in a very exposed area, the Cocoanut Grove, and if you're seen once or twice and you seem to be a bit in your cups, why, the legend gets around that you're a lush. I think that's true, though, of anybody in the public eye. I had a few episodes where I was working at the Cocoanut Grove and went to Caliente and didn't get back, things like that. And once or twice I may have been a little over the edge while working there, but I never was very wild. I certainly had a good time!"

ANSWER NUMBER SEVEN
"Highly questionable that I ever was an accomplished actor. I had some very fine direction in a couple of pictures, Leo McCarey in "GOING MY WAY", and from George Seaton in "THE COUNTRY GIRL". I didn't do any acting. I just did what I was told. I really wouldn't know how to go about acting myself unless somebody would help me, some good director."

ANSWER NUMBER EIGHT
"(Laugh) No, that is very inaccurate. Did they say that in THE SATURDAY EVENING POST? Boy, they're very generous! I'm no idol, I don't think to anybody, except maybe my children, I hope."

ANSWER NUMBER NINE
"Well, I think maybe that if I have fans, followers, I think it's because I'm very normal. I don't do anything very good and don't do anything too badly. Everybody is delighted when someone who's normal achieves some success. And I can't—I'd not be telling the truth—if I said that I hadn't achieved some success, "cause I have."

"THE SATURDAY EVENING POST"
Curtis Circulation Company
presents an "interview-special" with
★ BING CROSBY ★
(Currently starring in the 20th Century-Fox film Production "STAGECOACH")
33⅓ Microgroove Script Enclosed with timing
366-USA Original interview by Dick Strout 610
• OPEN-END INTERVIEW •
(For use with local commentator)
IMPORTANT! For broadcast between March 29 thru April 11, 1966
Released simultaneously by GARRISON SYSTEM LTD. Box 907, Beverly Hills, California Serving 2500 Stations -- Worldwide

ANSWER NUMBER TEN
"Identification, and it's a matter of being in good hands all through my career, and taking good advice from people like Jack Kapp at Decca Records, who really got me started in the record business and guided me through all those early years. And my attorney, John O'Melveny, who has been with me over 30 years, and my brother, Everett, and Buddy De Sylva when he was head of

Paramount. He put the "ROAD" pictures together and he put "GOING MY WAY"—that was his idea—together. And if you get under auspices like these through your career and listen to these people, why you've got a great chance." Bing Crosby, 1966

E! ENTERTAINMENT BIOGRAPHY OF BING - A REAL DISAPPOINTMENT

On December 21, 1998 the E! Entertainment cable television network broadcast a new half-hour review of Bing's "dark and troubled life,, as part of its tell-all series devoted to "the flip side of Hollywood's stars" entitled "MYSTERIES AND SCANDALS".

With a series title like that, I expected the worst and, I regret to say, I wasn't surprised despite the on-camera participation of several leading Crosby experts, including Bob DeFlores, Steven Lewis and Roger Osterholm, and major behind-the-scene contributions by Cathy and Hobie Wilson and other Bing fans, the overall result was, unfortunately, largely just another rehash of the only-too-familiar criticisms of Bing's personal life that we have heard ever since the publication of "THE HOLLOW MAN" and Gary Crosby's "Daddy Dearest" claims that Bing was a mean, child-abusing father. This short program (only about 25 minutes after skipping all the advertisements) did little to balance its "scandals" approach with much information about Bing's fifty years as the world's most popular and best-loved entertainer. But it certainly included a complete re-run of all the usual negatives about Bing the "fallen down drunk of a singer", Bing the "philanderer and absentee husband and parent", Bing the "terrible, abusive father", and on and on.

Phillip Crosby

There was, nevertheless, one welcome and positive aspect to this otherwise disappointing exercise in television journalism-an on-camera interview with Phillip Crosby, Bing's only surviving son from his marriage to Dixie Lee. During the program in a quiet, straight-forward way, Phillip disputed all of Gary Crosby's unproven charges about Bing's behavior as a father, emphasized that Gary always was a complainer and a whiner, and that Gary more than deserved any discipline that came his way while they were growing up.

It was a heartening experience to see Phillip again after so many years, and his defense of Bing's actions as a father was most convincing. And, considering that of all the self-appointed experts who have come forward to criticize Bing's personal life since his death, Phillip is the only one of the bunch alive today who was present when Bing's first four sons were growing up, I would bet a lot more on Phillip's comments than all the rest put together, especially those from the obviously ungrateful number-one-son, Gary.

Remainder of the Program

The rest of the E! Entertainment program on Bing suffered from several major faults. First and foremost was the demeanor and attitude of the so-called host. Glaring malevolently into the camera and speaking like a prosecuting attorney at a vice trial, he continually demonstrated a strong dislike of Bing Crosby "the man", and only a grudging acceptance of the fact that Bing had ever made much of a contribution to the entertainment world.

Also, through obviously-directed questions and carefully-controlled editing, the program producer also managed to extract comments from messrs DeFlores, Lewis and Osterholm—plus several other talking heads—which supported still another run-through of the charges about Bing the "dark and troubled man". Listening to all of this once again only made me wonder when Bing ever had the time, or the talent, to become the world's most popular entertainer. I must have blinked, and missed something along the way!

The ever-helpful producer and the ever-friendly host even managed to drag up again the scurrilous story about a "Crosby family curse, which first saw the light of day years ago during another put-down of Bing during a similar exercise in television tabloid journalism. I thought that ridiculous fabrication had long since disappeared into well-deserved oblivion. But no, once again we had to ask: "Was Bing somehow responsible for the deaths of two of his sons that occurred many years after his own passing?" "And was Bing somehow responsible for the last wasted years of Gary's life?" "And was all of this because of the famous Crosby curse?" BALDERDASH!

In addition to my negative reaction to the repetitive Bing-bashing, which we have all heard so many times before, I also fault the E! Entertainment program for failing to give the viewer any real appreciation of Bing the performer. Which, after all, is why so many people still have very fond memories of Bing even two decades after his death. Although a number of still photographs of Bing and a few movie and television clips were shown from time-to-time as background material in between comments by the various participants, they were usually shown silently and did not adequately display Bing's real talents as a performer. And even the few snatches of Bing's recordings that were played underneath the film footage were run at such low volume that it took an effort to even tell what Bing was singing.

The uninformed general audience who might have tuned in must have wondered what the fuss was all about. Who was this guy Crosby, anyway, that they were going on so much about? Sounds like a really weird guy who finked out on his first family right and left, but did a little better the second time around. In the meanwhile, why bother? He only turns up these days once a year to groan through "White Christmas", so why not give the subject a rest?

I generally subscribe to the belief that any publicity is good for Bing which helps keep his legacy alive with the general

public. But despite the commendable efforts of quite a number of well-known ICC members, and the participation of Phillip Crosby, my conclusion is that this E! Entertainment program did far too little in that respect. Despite possible opinions to the contrary among other Crosby collectors, I think that the sooner this latest exercise in revisionist history disappears from view, the better. Bing was human and never claimed to be perfect, but he deserves a lot more than this program had to offer. REQUIESCAT IN PACE!

BING ON TELEVISION

On a more positive note, a number of Bing's films have continued to be shown on national cable television channels throughout the United States during the past four months. Although most are old favorites, every now and then a rarity turns up, such as the 1966 remake of "STAGECOACH", which is not often seen. Here is the list for the most recent period:

November 1998
THE COUNTRY GIRL - November 3,8,12,18,27 (Home Box Office)
HIGH TIME - November 2,7,11,20,21,24,25 (Flix Movie Channel)
November 6,17,28 - (Encore Movie Channel)
JUST FOR YOU - November 18 - (Cinemax Movie Channel)
THE ROAD TO HONG KONG - November 27 - (Turner Classic Movies)
ROAD TO MOROCCO - November 8 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO SINGAPORE - November 7 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO UTOPIA - November 8 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR - November 7 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS - November 18,19 - (American Movie Classics)
STAGECOACH (1966) - November 23 - (Cinemax Movie Classics)
TOP O' THE MORNING - November 29,30 - (American Movie Classics)
WELCOME STRANGER - November 29 - (American Movie Classics)
December 1998
THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S - December 19 - (Turner Classic Movies)
BING CROSBY: AMERICA'S CROONER - December 27,28 - (Arts & Entertainment Network)
BLUE SKIES - December 6 - (American Movie Classics)
THE COUNTRY GIRL December 27 - (HBO Signature Channel)
THE EMPEROR WALTZ December 2 - (American Movie Classics)
GOING HOLLYWOOD - December 28 - (Turner Classic Movies)
HIGH SOCIETY - December 18 - (Turner Classic movies)
HIGH TIME - December 3,13 - (The Movie Channel)
December 4,12,17 - (Encore Movie Channel)
December 10,11,24,25 - (Fox Movie Channel)
HOLIDAY INN - December 25 - (American Movie Classics)
THE MAGIC OF BING CROSBY - December 25 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO MOROCCO - December 10 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO SINGAPORE - December 10 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO UTOPIA - December 10 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR - December 10 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS - December 12,21,22 (American Movie Classics)
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT! - December 7,16,22,24,26 (HBO Signature Channel)
WHITE CHRISTMAS - December 20 - (Pix Movie Channel)
January 1999
ANYTHING GOES (1956) - January 1,2,9,10 - (Flix Movie Channel)
January 7,11,17,23,29 - (Encore Movie Channel)
A CONNECTICUT YANKEE - January 9,27 - (American Movie Classics)
GOING MY WAY - January 18 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS - January 2,28,29 - (American Movie Classics)
February 1999
GOING MY WAY - February 18 - (American Movie Classics)
JUST FOR YOU - February 2 - (Cinemax Movie Channel)
ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS - February 18 (Cinemax Movie Channel
STAGECOACH (1966) - February 18,19 - (Fox Movie Channel)
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT! - February 12 - (Cinemax Movie Channel)

OOPS! DEPARTMENT

Readers of BING will recall the back cover of our Summer 1998 issue which featured a striking color drawing of Bing in a sailor cap reproduced from an American song magazine of the early 1930's. Unfortunately, in the rush to print, neither our esteemed editor nor your humble correspondent thought to acknowledge from whom we had obtained this fascinating look at the young Bing. 1 would, therefore, like to rectify that grievous oversight by giving full and faithful credit to our one-and-only ICC member up in the state of Vermont, one Jason Whiton, an artist and avid Crosby collector residing at the charming address of Elm Lea Farm in the town of Putney. Jason has even offered to supply other rare items for future issues of BING, and I can only add "please do so". And to Jason and all other such contributors, we certainly will try to give them appropriate mention whenever they do so.

And with this apology for another of my many inadequacies, I will close this report on news about Bing from this side of the Atlantic for the springtime. I look

forward to being with all of you again come time for BING #122 in the summer.

F. B. (Wig) Wiggins February 20, 1999

(Editor: A 'tour de force' from Wig to whom we extend our grateful thanks for all he does to make the ICC such a success in the USA. The new CD is most welcome and how nice to read of the accomplishments of Glenn Taranto. Incidentally, please send your answers to the quiz to Wig. The E! Entertainment Biography has proved somewhat controversial and we shall have more about this later in this edition. Finally may I add my apologies to Jason Whiton. There is no real excuse but in mitigation, I do sometimes find it difficult when adding photos etc. at the last moment to amend the text as well. I'll try harder in the future!)

BOOKS 'N' BING

1. Visions of Jazz: The First Century

In the last magazine, Gary Giddins mentioned his new jazz book and we have now received a copy of this magnificent work. Gary has been a staff writer covering the jazz scene for the Village Voice since 1973 and also he is the author of books such as 'Riding on a Blue Note', 'Rhythm-a-ning', 'Celebrating Bird', 'Satchmo' and 'Faces in the Crowd'. In 1997, he was awarded the first Gerald Marx Award by ASCAP in recognition of his having won the greatest number of prizes since the inception thirty years ago of the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Awards Programs. For seven years, he was artistic director of the American Jazz Orchestra, which he founded in 1986. Not only is his knowledge encyclopaedic, he is also a marvellous writer and 'Visions of Jazz' contains writing of the highest standard.

The book runs to 690 pages and takes a look at various key personalities in the jazz world over the last 100 years. It does not seek to be a history but the chapters on the various people take the reader through the development of jazz to the current day. I do not claim to be particularly knowledgeable about jazz and I have to admit that I had never heard of some of those featured. Purists will be appalled to read that I was ignorant about Jimmy Rushing, Hannibal Peterson, Don Pullen and others but I do know about Al Jolson, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra Duke Ellington and so many more who are discussed amongst a total of 79 chapters. The chapters are works of art in themselves and just look at some of the reviews of the book.

The New York Times Book Review, Alfred Appel Jr. As it turns out, 'Visions of Jazz' is the finest unconventional history of jazz ever written — a brilliant, indispensable book, comprehensive enough given the certainty that a total history of jazz at this point, the century mark, invites a shallow inclusiveness.

The Washington Post Book World, Jonathan Yardley 'Visions of Jazz' is not a reference book; rather, it is (to date, at least) the definitive compendium by the most interesting jazz critic now at work....He knows his subject, his prose is interesting and graceful, his judgments are measured and fair, and the only camp of which he is a member is his own.

There are many other very complimentary reviews to be found on the Internet and we can therefore safely say that Gary's book has been well received! Published by Oxford University Press in New York, the book sells for $35 and the ISBN number is 0-19-507675-3. I was surprised that there were no photographs but Gary tells me that this was to prevent the cost of the book becoming too expensive. Incidentally, there is a companion CD set which has been issued by Blue Note Records and contains 38 tracks.

Bing receives many mentions in *Visions of Jazz* although there is not a separate chapter on him because Gary will be publishing his own book about Bing in due course. As we know, the book on Bing has had a long gestation period and I had to smile at Gary's comments in the acknowledgments section:
"....who allowed me to work half-time during the years I wrote Visions of Jazz and another book that is (I swear) nearing completion."

Gary really is a powerful and perceptive writer and his book on Bing is surely going to be the definitive work on Bing's career when it is published towards the end of the year.

2. A Rain of Death

Bob Achorn writes with a review of a fairly new novel.

Bing Crosby made an early splash in fiction in John Steinbeck's masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath*. It was published in 1939. In Steinbeck's novel, someone slips a nickel into the jukebox at a food stop on Route 66. The record starts playing. As Steinbeck puts it, "Bing Crosby's voice—golden." Just to prove it's fiction, Bing is singing "Thanks for the Memory," a tune he didn't record until 17 years later. But he did sing it a couple of times on radio in early 1938. Steinbeck may have heard that and assumed that Bing had recorded it, as he had recorded so many other Paramount hits.

Now, 59 years after Steinbeck, Bing is a central figure of sorts in a new book, a murder mystery, *A Rain of Death* by John Logue. It is a paperback, published by Dell in the United States in March, 1998. It is the fourth in a series of mysteries by Logue placed at the scene of major golf tournaments. This one is set at the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am at Pebble Beach, California, in 1974—noted for being hampered by four days of almost constant rain. Bing wasn't at the scene. Instead, in the novel as in real life, he was hospitalized for a lung tumour.

But the Crosby name shows up on most of the 295 pages. And Bing himself makes a couple of appearances from his hospital bed. Various real people—Phil Harris, Larry Crosby, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus—are mixed in

with Logue's fictional characters. In one dramatic moment at Bing's bedside, the hero—an Associated Press golf writer named John Morris—saves Bing from being killed by the murderer.

Bing's scenes are written in his familiar cadences. While the book is not sentimental, it is very friendly to Bing, citing a lot of his good works and kindnesses. Gary Player says he came over from England simply because Bing invited him. Logue goes on:

"Who could deny Bing? As Art Rosenbaum of San Francisco had written, 'Crosby started this tour because he found golfers amiable types. He enjoyed the delightful needling, the subtlety in taming the little white ball, and the grandeur of everything outdoors.' Not to mention raising a glass or two. More than once Crosby had said he got the biggest kick out of the golf tournament of any one thing he's done with his life. When you consider his music, his Academy Award, and all those road movies with Dorothy Lamour, sometimes in a sarong, that's saying a bit."

And Logue, like many of the rest of us, expresses regret that many years later The Crosby has been "reinvested under a depressing corporate name and sponsorship." Logue, a former sportswriter for The Atlanta, Georgia, Journal, knows the golf scene and provides a rich history of The Crosby and detailed accounts of the courses on the Monterey Peninsula. The mystery is a bit less than compelling but the writing is good and the atmosphere is terrific.

Bob Achorn

(Editor: Thanks Bob. I have read this book too and enjoyed it. Probably not obtainable in the UK but USA and Canadian members should be able to pick it up without too much difficulty. I got mine at Borders. The ISBN number is 0-440-22397-0.)

CRY: The Johnnie Ray Story

Nancy Hogan, Roger Osterholm's sister, and at one time President of a Johnnie Ray fan club, drew our attention to this biography of Johnnie Ray by Jonny Whiteside, published in 1994 by Barricade Books, Inc., New York. The book contains some interesting Bing references as follows.

Page 16: Elma [Johnnie Ray's sister] was a voracious pop fan who kept the family radio tuned to exotic live broadcasts from the Coconut Grove and innumerable hotels and ballrooms back East. The sounds of Bing Crosby and Russ Columbo added a hint of more sophisticated psychology to the mix on which Johnnie was weaned.

Page 38: He [Johnnie Ray] strolled along Wilshire Boulevard, gazing at the fabled Cocoanut Grove, which seemed to erupt out of the dignified Ambassador Hotel edifice. It was a scented garden of glamour and passion and success; that's where Crosby made it, where Rudy Vallee reigned triumphant.

Page 82: It [Johnnie Ray's musical psychology] insinuated and pervaded the listener's subconscious in a way no singer managed since Bing Crosby's shrewdly delivered cartoon erotica of 1931. Bing's purring croon reached femmes with a moistening effect that liberated pop singers (and audiences) in a subtle way that escaped Columbo and Vallee. Crosby's was all implicit longing, intimacy and desire, never stated outright but profoundly sensed, thoroughly understood. While Johnnie eschewed the Crosby subtlety, his entire stance was based on the same sort of intimate and inescapably personal communication.

Page 117: When Bing Crosby stepped out of this line [of popular music] with his jaunty, collegiate who-cares ethic, it was a brilliant re-assessment of the popular psyche, one much more easily accepted and identified with. Rudy Vallee's "Vagabond Lover" typified this cozy side step: Bing and Rudy were all about getting laid, and their ability to glorify it without shattering the cultural context was deeply satisfying. But it was tame, mild.

Page 232: I [Johnnie Ray] was influenced by Kay Starr and Billie Holliday. You could say that Bing Crosby was influenced by Russ Columbo and Perry Como.

Well, some different views and it's the first time I've read that Bing was influenced by Perry Como. It's usually the other way round! Our thanks to Nancy for sending in these extracts.

Jasper Park Lodge - In the heart of the Canadian Rockies

This book by Cyndi Smith was first published by Coyote Books of Canmore, Alberta, Canada in 1985 and a copy has been sent to me recently by Bert Morton of Stafford. Bert spent a couple of nights at Jasper Park Lodge last year and picked up the booklet then. The booklet runs to 91 pages and contains some fascinating excerpts about Bing and some rare photographs as well. Let's start with page 37:-

"The spring of 1946 found the Lodge enjoying its first season since closing for the war. The staff were even preparing to open three weeks earlier than usual for a group of about 200 people from the Paramount movie company. They were preparing to film scenes for *The Emperor Waltz,* starring Bing Crosby and Joan Fontaine. The Canadian Rockies were being substituted for the Alps of the Austrian Tyrol. An advance group of directors, producers and department heads arrived in Jasper on the 24th of May to scout the locations, assisted by park superintendent Wood and other park officials. A few days later a special train brought the rest of the crew and cast to town.

Billy Wilder was one of the directors of *The Emperor Waltz*, which cost $3 million to make. The cast and crew were well-received by the guests and employees of the Lodge, and by the townspeople. Saturday and Sunday afternoons would see a lot of locals driving out to the locations to watch the filming. Bing Crosby was a local favourite, both because of his passion for golf and fishing, and because of his sincere, relaxed manner with everyone.

Crosby became so enamoured of the golfing and fishing that Wilder had guards posted at all strategic outlets to make sure that Bing didn't wander off the set when, in Bing's opinion, his "weather sense" was better than that of the barometer or light meter. He returned to play in the Totem Pole golf tournament three times.

On one visit Bing went out sheep hunting with some outfitters. Caught in a high wind and heavily-falling snow, they dismounted to shelter behind some rocks. Feeling sorry for Bing, who was shivering, wet and looked awfully miserable, the outfitter asked, "Anything you want, Mr. Crosby?" "As long as I have a wish," Bing said, "I wish Hope was here."

Bing rarely passed up an informal opportunity to sing, whether in the dining room, the staff recreational hall or a function in town. Once, when passing a table in the dining room, he overheard a youngster from Oklahoma say to his parents, "Gee, I wish he would sing." Bing promptly swung around, mounted the orchestra stand and sang for 20 minutes.

After the filming of *The Emperor Waltz* was completed, director Wilder needed 30 lodge pole pines to take back to Hollywood to use as backdrops during his studio shooting. The superintendent had to wire to Ottawa for permission, which was denied. It's thought that Wilder dug them up anyway, at night."

Bing watches Tyrolean dancers practice on the Lodge golf course during the filming of 'The Emperor Waltz' in 1946. Photograph courtesy of Jasper-Yellowhead Historical Society.

The next chapter covers 'The Silver Totem Pole' which is the name of the golf tournament played at the Jasper Park Lodge golf course each September. Page 47 tells us:

"The hero of the JPL course has to be Bing Crosby. While working on the movie *The Emperor Waltz*, being filmed in the park, Bing was on the greens every opportunity he had. The following year, which was 1947, Bing came back to play in the tournament. Almost everyone has a story about Bing when he was in Jasper, but without doubt the final play was exciting. Bing was in the final with Gordon Verley, of Victoria, British Columbia, and they were all square on the 36th hole:

Verley was only about a foot from the pin on his third while Bing's second lay beyond the green, at least 30 feet astray of the mark. From this position Bing couldn't even see the pin. He was under the shade of a massive Douglas fir. To make matters more despairing a youngster maintained constant squirming just behind him. The Hollywood ace took his stance then broke it with a good-humoured offer to change places with the lad. This little act cut the tension for the big gallery and Bing followed up by almost nonchalantly chipping the ball into the cup.

Bing later apologised to Verley for being so lucky! During the tournament Bing had made a promise to his caddy during a practice round - a new suit for every birdie on the 18th hole. He had to make good three times."

Bing receives the winner's trophy.

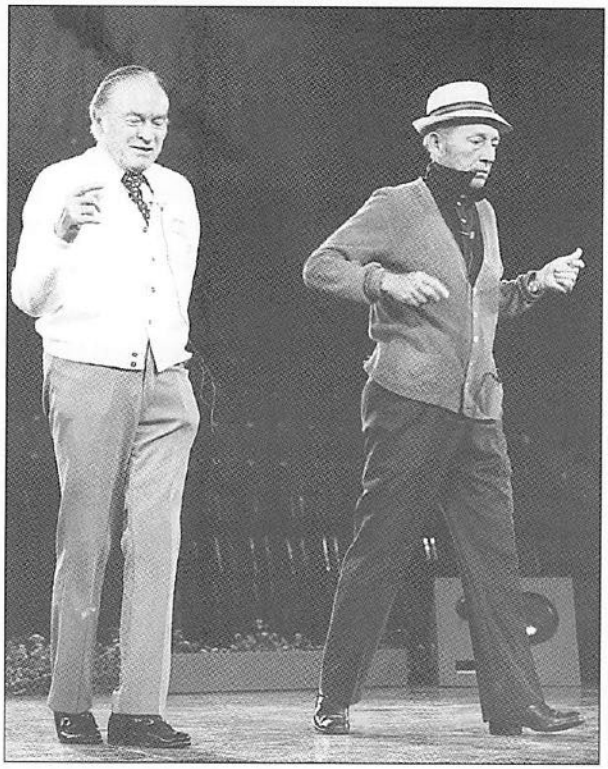
Fascinating stuff and what a golf match! Thanks Bert for supplying the booklet to us.

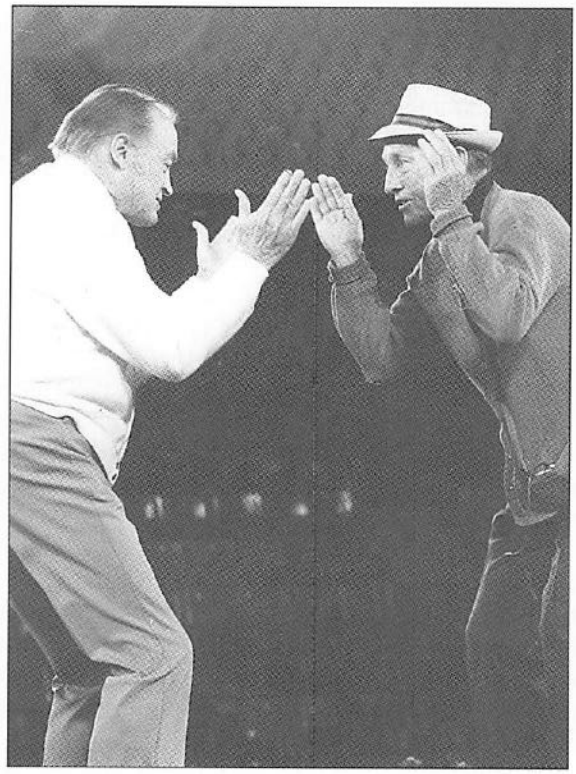
The Bob Hope Olympic Special

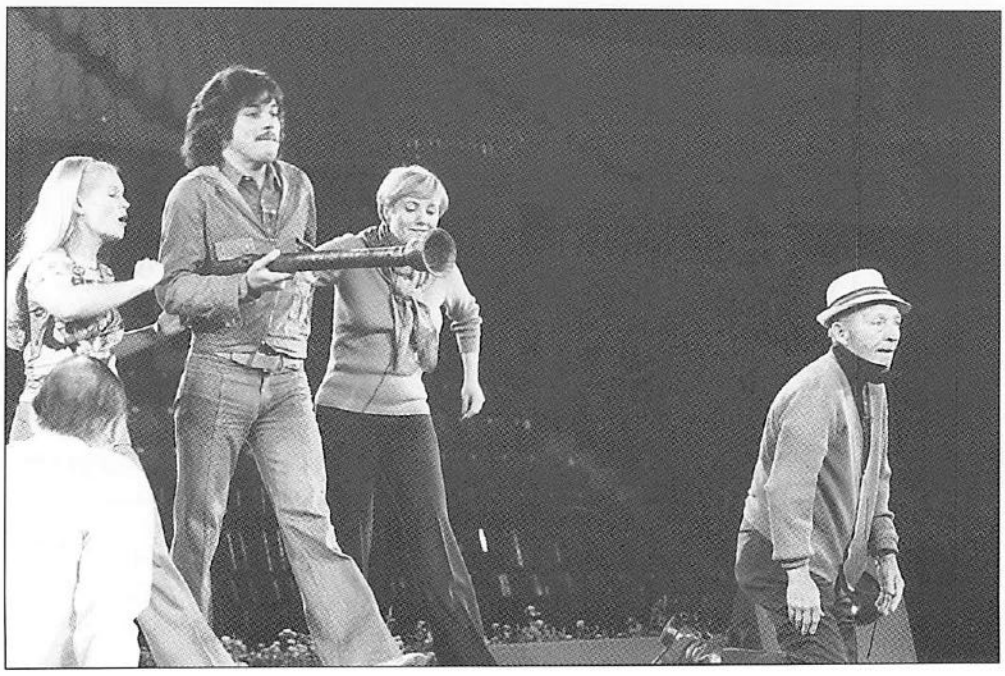
This benefit for the US and Canadian Olympic teams was recorded in Montreal on April 12 1976 and televised on NBC on April 21, 1976. Greg Van Beek wrote to us about this and we reproduce his letter over the page:

"I'm enclosing something 1 thought you might be able to use for BING magazine. These are a set of photos from NBC studios, taken in April, 1976 at the Montreal Forum for the Bob Hope Olympic benefit special. The show took place and was taped 12 April 1976, and these pics were taken at the rehearsal a day or two before. They show Bing with Freddie Prinze, who starred on the popular TV series here in the US "Chico and the Man". Freddie committed suicide in January 1977. Also pictured is Shirley Jones, and country-western singer Lynn Anderson. I got them from someone at NBC who recently fished them out of the waste paper basket! My heart sank when I heard this; imagine all the other publicity photos that weren't salvaged.

They are special, in that this was the last time Bing and Bob actually performed and sang together. Bob was guest for Bing's 50th anniversary show in Pasadena in March, 1977, but they only had a dialogue scene together. Here you see them do one last "patty cake" in a sketch that had them dressed as Canadian mounties. See the TV listings that were printed in BING a few years back for more details on the show. 1 know several people that were in attendance for that performance, including Frank Whittaker, and the late Jean-Paul Frereault."







As Greg says, details of the show were given in BING some years ago but to save you all rummaging through back copies, here's what Bing sang:

Where The Morning Glories Grow
At My Time of Life
We Lost Our Man (with Bob Hope, part of 'Mounties' sketch)
Where the Blue of the Night (few bars only as part of a song by Bob Hope)
Medley with Bob Hope (Bing takes part in: Buttons and Bows, Two Sleepy People, Thanks for the Memory, Road to Morocco, Put It There Pal)

Jean-Paul Frereault was indeed present and wrote about the experience in BING #42 (June 1976) as well as describing how he met Bing at his hotel and in his dressing room. Many thanks Greg for providing these rare photographs.

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £2 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from the transaction as a result of these entries
Please send all advertisements to the Editor

Franc Joyce, 15 Farmhouse Rd., Manor Farm Estate, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Mids WV12 4AU
FOR SALE
Large scrap book covering Bing's appearance at the Palladium, his death and tributes, plus lots of pictures £50 o.n.o. A special edition of 'Reveille' and 6 tribute magazines £10 each. 2 souvenir programmes of Bing's appearance at the London Palladium (1976 and 1977) Also 2 complimentary admission tickets for Bing Crosby Show at Wembley Television Studios 1961 and Parkinson Show in 1975 (offers). A collection of piano music copies (£3 each English) (£5 each American). Also 4 Bing Crosby song books £5 each. Canvas oil painting of Bing and 2 charcoal portraits (mounted for framing) offers.

Mike Hullah, 10 Cambrai Drive, Norton, Worcester WR5 2PN (tel. 01905 350255)
"I have some 40 odd 78 rpm records of Bing which are surplus. I would be pleased to give them to any Crosby fan ready and willing to uplift them."
Please contact Mike direct.

Bert Minister, 80 Fox St., Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 9JY (Tel. 0161-480-0722)
Bert has 146 LPs of Bing for sale. Write to Bert with wants and offering prices. Please enclose a SAE.

Thomas Hughes, 30 Braemar Drive, Garforth, Leeds (Tel. 0113 - 2868607)
WANTED
1. The LP BING 4 'East Side of Heaven' from Bing's Hollywood series.
2. The video 'Children of the Dark'.

Reg Wood, 11 Springwood Rd., Rawdon, Leeds LS19 6BH
"I am still on the search for the LP 'Bing's Hollywood No. 14 (Zing a Little Zong) to complete the set. I've been searching for this one for over 20 years."
Can anybody help Reg?

Michael Crampton, 19 Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton Leeds LS7 2NL
The following are available from Michael:
"Bing Crosby on Compact Disc", A5 soft bound - with details of the vast majority of Bing's CDs. An invaluable reference book. 155 pages. £10.45
"Bing Crosby - the illustrated biography" - Michael Freedland's hardback biography. Available to club members at a specially reduced price. 127 pages, £13.
"Bing Crosby - a Diary of a Lifetime" - A5 hardback, a definitive look at events in Bing's life - beautifully illustrated. 96 pages, £12.
"1999 Colour Calendar", featuring many of Bing's rare sheet music covers. £5.
"BING magazine" - back issues of numbers 94, 95, 101, 104, 106, 107, 108, 110, 118, 119 and 120 available. £2 each.

Edgar Lawson, 19 Belgrave St., Liscard, Wallasey, Merseyside L44 1BL
"I am missing BING #117 and I am anxious to obtain it as without this issue I feel I'm without a part of me! Can anyone supply this? Unfortunately Michael Crampton doesn't have any left."

Lynne Charlton, 13 Factory Lane, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8HQ (tel. 0115 930 4480)
Lynne is looking for a copy of the sheet music of 'True Love' in a piano or keyboard easy play range. Please contact Lynne direct.

Etty Gits, address as on inside front cover.
LOOKING FOR BING BOOKS?
After years of bidding at auctions and looking around, I finally got a copy of the rare book on Bing by Dr. Mize. Anybody looking for out-of-print books on Bing might find them on the following website:-
:http://www.bibliofind.com
(Editor: I tried this and I picked up Dr. Mize's book too as well as Norman Blackburn's book on the history of Lakeside Golf Club where Bing was the club champion for several years. Marvellous! Whilst on the subject of the Internet, if you are looking for Bing memorabilia try www.ebay.com. There is an amazing selection of goodies for the Crosby fan.)

BING BINDERS

Keep your magazines in mint condition by storing them in these specially made binders. They have blue covers with BING in gold on the spine and hold 10 copies, which allow them to either be inserted or removed, yet also open flat for easy reading. Costing £6.99 inc postage, £7.99 to Europe, £8.99 elsewhere, they are available from Ken Mason, 12 Wycomb Grove, Melton Mowbray, Leics. LE13 1EQ

CROSBY CLUBS AROUND THE WORLD

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby organisations

Bing Crosby Internet Museum:
WWW.Kcmetro.cc.mo.us/~crosby/

Bing's Friends And Collectors Society,
Hobie and Cathie Wilson, 236 Andrieux St., Sonoma, California 95476-6909, USA (tel. 707 996 0257 - E-mail Mailcrosby@aol.com - Web Site address http://members.aol.com/CrosbyPage/crosbypageindex.html)

Club Crosby, BINGANG
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
435 So. Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, Missouri 63122, USA
(E-mail: ClubCrosby@aol.com)
(Members in Europe should enrol via Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP)

The Queensland Bing Crosby Society,
John Wright, 17 Thurecht Parade, Scarborough, Queensland 4020, Australia

The Victorian Bing Crosby Society
Bob Neate, 22 Pakenham St., Blackburn, Victoria, Australia 3130.

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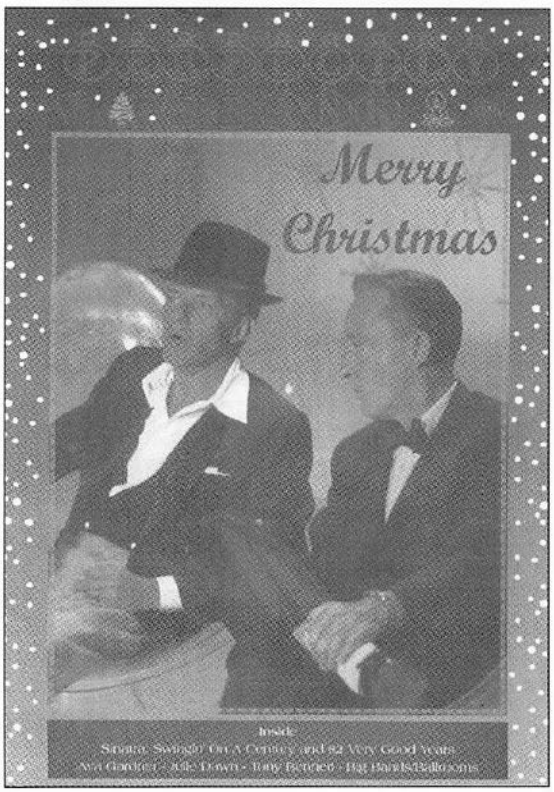
OTHER APPRECIATION SOCIETIES

We have reciprocal arrangements with the following clubs and societies for publicity purposes. They kindly advertise our club in their magazines and we are very pleased to return the favour.



Sinatra Music Society, 183 Summerfields Avenue, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9NU
This Society produces a most impressive magazine on a bi-monthly basis and we were delighted to see Bing and Frank on the cover of the December issue. That issue also carried a reprint of our obituary of Frank which Ken Crossland wrote for us. The magazine includes features on all artistes performing quality popular music. The annual sub for UK members is £10 and write to Des Davis at the above address for details.

Sinatra Music Society, Dublin Branch, c/o Chris Hitchcock, 21 Roselawn Walk, Dublin 15, Ireland (phone: 01 8212418)

Tony Bennett Appreciation Society, c/o Mark Fox, 13 Sunnyside, Heckmondwike, W. Yorks WF16 0LN

Pat Boone Appreciation Society, P. O. Box 63, Sunderland, SR1 1PN

The International Petula Clark Society, c/o Terry Young, 38 Elmley Way, Margate, Kent CT9 4ES

Alma Cogan Appreciation Society, c/o Stephen Woods, 9 Canterbury Avenue, Bowerham, Lancaster LA1 4AU

The Sammy Davis Jr Association, c/o Paul Iacovou, 6 Thyra Grove, North Finchley, London N12 8HB

The Doris Day Society, 31 Kirkfield Rise, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9DX

The Judy Garland Club c/o Anthony R. Scarrott, Flat 3, 25 Holland Rd., Hove, East Sussex BN3 1JF

The Al Jolson Society, c/o Richard Selwood, 5 Abbotsfield, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TA4 2SU

Frankie Laine International Appreciation Society, c/o Tony Cooper, 18 Napier Crescent, Seamer, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 4HY

International Friends of Gordon Macrae, c/o Mrs. Pat Robinson, 47 Lea Mill Park Drive, Yeaden, Leeds LS19 7YH The Dean Martin Association, P. O. Box 80, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1ZR

Guy Mitchell Appreciation Society, 11 Kierhill Rd., Balloch, Cumbernauld, Glasgow G68 9BH

KEITH PARKINSON'S
CELLULOID CROSBY

When is a Crosby film not a Crosby film? If the production was intended for theatrical release and available for viewing by the general public then it qualifies as far as I am concerned. Does it need to go beyond that? We'd be all the poorer without *High Tor, Demon Under the Bed, Goldilocks, Dr. Cook's Garden* or even the *Bilko presents Bing* episode from the Phil Silvers Show. And there is the fascinating *Person to Person* programme made in 1954 which allowed Edward R. Murrow to nose around Bing's home. Yet these were presentations aimed at television audiences and the production values look cheap on cinema screens. Most film shot for TV transmission is on 16 mm. Cinemas project 35 mm film. Blown-up 16 mm doesn't stand close scrutiny on the big screen.

This article looks at film footage which doesn't fit the commercial concept of a Hollywood studio release. A number of short films which featured Bing were made for non-theatrical presentation or were made available to theatres free of charge. They were usually in support of a good cause or were disguised propaganda.

In 1951 Chesterfield cigarettes sponsored *The Fifth Freedom*. It's been around on video since the mid-eighties. It anticipated the attitude towards smoking which prevails at the end of the Twentieth Century. The freedom referred to in the title is the freedom to choose to smoke. The underlying message is the freedom of choice of tobacco company products, with Chesterfield being the one to go for. The on screen promoters of Chesterfield cigarettes were Bob Hope, Perry Como, Bing and Arthur Godfrey. All four were already linked with the company because they appeared on radio or television in shows sponsored by Chesterfield. In fact, on Bing's Chesterfield Show of April 4th, 1950 both Como and Godfrey guested and sang 'Dear Old Girl' with Bing. Arthur Godfrey was the link man in the film and appeared prominently during the film's ten minute running time. On screen he was usually wreathed in cigarette smoke. Godfrey was the least known of the three outside the States. He presented a long running show called *Talent Scouts* which presented up and coming entertainers. He takes the credit for discovering Pat Boone and featuring him on the show. *Talent Scouts* ran in the States on both radio and television in the 1950s. Godfrey was also popular with record buyers. His voice gave the impression of being matured by 100 Chesterfields a day. He favoured a simple accompaniment to his vocals, namely himself on ukulele. He is seen in *The Fifth Freedom* strumming that instrument as he sings - appropriately enough - 'Ukulele Style'. His biggest seller in the UK was 'C'n I Canoe You Up the River' in 1950. Before that Columbia had released several other of the recordings he made for CBS, the best remembered being 'Too Fat Polka' and 'Candy and Cake'. The latter song was also duetted with Bing in Godfrey's only other Crosby Chesterfield Show appearance on May 24th, 1950. He was in competition with Bing around Christmas, 1950 when his recording of '(It's a) Marshmallow World' was released the month after Bing's Brunswick 78 became available. Godfrey died in 1983 at the age of 79 having recovered from surgery for lung cancer. His radio career continued through the 1960s. By then his message was modified to advising people not to smoke, but if they did, to smoke Chesterfields. We know that Bing became disenchanted with promoting a product which presented health risks and that he eventually failed to renew his weekly radio show contract with Chesterfield. Bing's musical contribution to *The Fifth Freedom* was a performance of 'You're a Grand Old Flag'. The glorious Technicolor musical sequence does full justice to Bing's hat and jacket, designed by his regular colour blind outfitter.

Bing appeared in two films for the Christophers' Association. Both were available on free hire for showing to organisations willing to promote the Christophers. The Christophers believed that it was the duty of anyone in an influential position to do all they could to counter the world's evil. That is why penal institutions, amongst other "closed communities", made use of these morally uplifting one and two reelers. I have only seen the first of these two shorts, *You Can Change the World*. I can understand how a captive audience would be of benefit for the longest short film I can remember sitting through. The credentials of *You Can Change the World* are impeccable. Leo McCarey of *Going My Way* and *The Bells of St Mary's* directed. The producer was William Perlberg, who co-produced two of Bing's "serious" fifties movies - *Little Boy Lost* and *The Country Girl*. And the cast includes Jack Benny and Eddie "Rochester' Anderson, Loretta Young, Ann Blyth, Paul Douglas and Irene Dunne. The end result provides no hint of the combined talent and experience involved. The static set, representing Jack Benny's living room, is as interesting as the rest of the film. The highlight is undoubtedly Bing's spot. Rochester introduces songwriters Johnny Burke and Jimmy Van Heusen who are closely followed by Bing. He sings their composition 'Early American'.

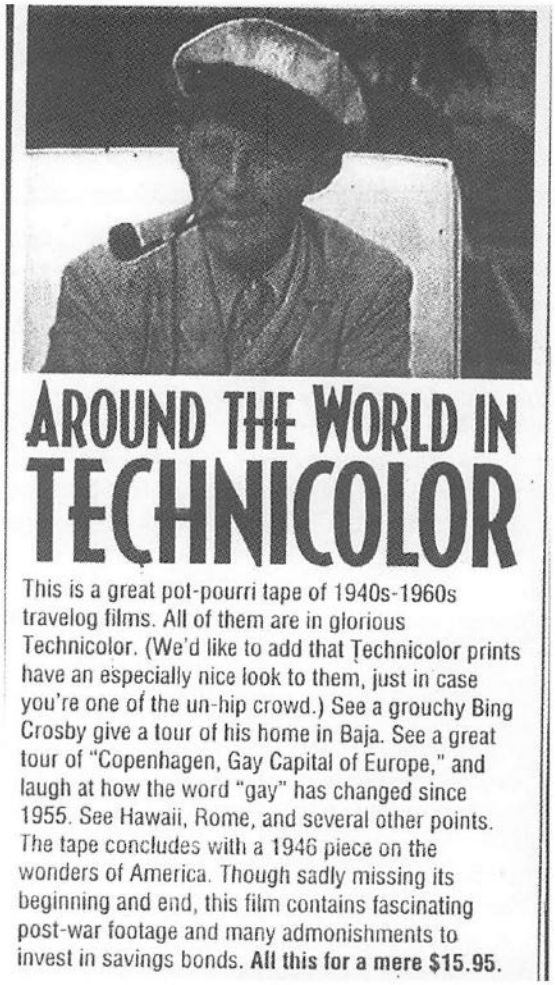
The second Christophers non-theatrical short was *Faith, Hope and Hogan*. It was released two years after *You Can Change the World* and Bing's contribution was non-vocal. As well as being available on free hire, *F, H and H* was shown on television in the USA The Hope and Hogan of the film's title are Bob and Ben respectively. The link between all three participants is golf and the shooting of the film took place on a Palm Springs golf course.

Golf is also the subject of *Honor Caddie*. A short colour film made in 1949 it was made to whip up support for

scholarships for golf caddies. Hardly the worthiest of charitable causes, it warranted the participation and support of Bing.

Another non-movie from Bing has also been seen by television viewers. It was a screen test for the film biography of Will Rogers. Made in 1944, Bing was made up to look like Rogers and attempted a drawling vocal delivery like that of the late actor. The film was not produced until many years later. By then it was no longer a Paramount project. Warner Bros. cast Will Rogers junior in their 1950 biopic *The Story of Will Rogers*. Junior was a credible impersonator of his folk hero dad but the film did little business in the U.K where Rogers senior was not too well known. Several years earlier Bing was seen in a public service one-reeler made the year after Rogers' death in 1935. Paramount filmed Crosby footage which was seen in a 9 minute Will Rogers trailer distributed free of charge to cinemas. Its object was to raise funds for a hospital built as a memorial to Rogers. Others who participated in the charitable project were Shirley Temple and May Robson, but it was Bing who made the greatest impact. After singing 'Home on the Range' on screen the song was reprised by Bing during the interval whilst ushers collected audience contributions. 20th Century-Fox distributed because Rogers had been signed to that studio and his films were still in circulation. Hs screen popularity was still building at the time of his death. His last three films, all released in 1935, were *Doubting Thomas, In Old Kentucky* and *Steamboat Round the Bend*. His box-office clout was such that he was second only to Shirley Temple in tenns of his revenue, earning value to his studio. I have always thought that Bob Bums, the bazooka playing regular on Bing's Kraft Music Hall broadcasts, was strongly influenced by Rogers. Both gave the impression of being self-educated soothsayers. Speaking the language of the common man, they scorned politicians and dispensed words of wisdom. Both could have said, "There's only one thing that can kill the movies, and that's education." It just happens that it was Rogers, even though it would fit Burns' KMH country rustic character.

And to close, an "unauthorised" Bing film appearance. The advertisement for Around the World in Technicolor illustrated here gives Bing prominence simply because he


AROUND THE WORLD IN
TECHNICOLOR
This is a great pot-pourri tape of 1940s-1960s travelog films. All of them are in glorious Technicolor. (We'd like to add that Technicolor prints have an especially nice look to them, just in case you're one of the un-hip crowd.) See a grouchy Bing Crosby give a tour of his home in Baja. See a great tour of "Copenhagen, Gay Capital of Europe," and laugh at how the word "gay" has changed since 1955. See Hawaii, Rome, and several other points. The tape concludes with a 1946 piece on the wonders of America. Though sadly missing its beginning and end, this film contains fascinating post-war footage and many admonishments to invest in savings bonds. All this for a mere $15.95.

This video was advertised only a few months ago and it can be obtained from LSVideo Inc, P. O. Box 415, Dept. C, Carmel, IN 46082 (317- 846-3736). Price $15.95 plus postage $2.05.

is the only "name" in what a seems to be a stitched together series of travelogues. Was the Crosby portion made as a home movie or for television use? And is Bing really grouchy in his sequence? Presumably he was quite happy to let people see his Baja home. Maybe it was a rehearsal for an Edward R. Murrow visit. Anyhow, its up to our American subscribers to judge for themselves. As the ad. says, its a mere $15.95 for 'this great potpourri".

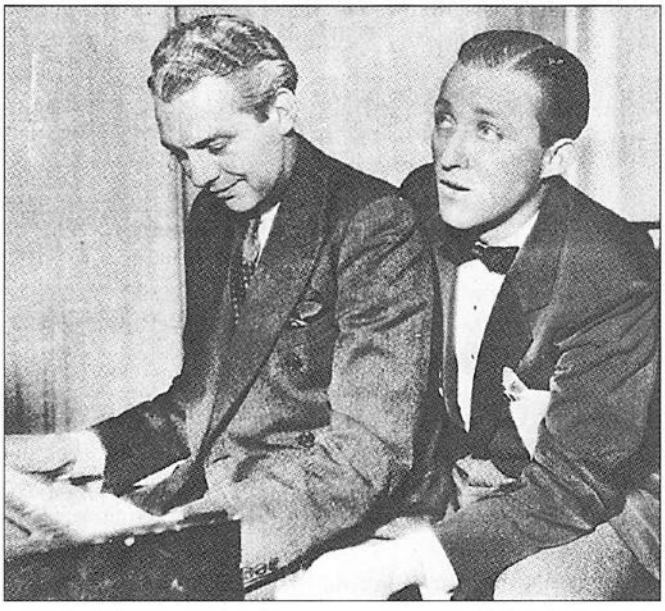
Keith Parkinson

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

JENNINGS, GORDON Special effects expert. Whether it was a talking camel or an eclipse of the sun, if it happened in a Paramount Picture, Jennings was the man who faked it. His ten years on Crosby films covered *Road to Morocco* (1942), *Dixie* (1943). *Going My Way* (1944), *Blue Skies* (1946), *Road to Rio* (1948), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1949) and *Here Comes the Groom* (1951). He retired in the 1950s. Nowadays computer technology achieves everything and more than Jennings was capable of creating.

JIMMY VALENTINE Song. The opening minutes of *The Star Maker* (1939) find Bing at the piano entertaining a group of orphans with this catchy ditty. The song's composers were Edward Maddox and Gus Edwards. Bing's character - Larry Earl - in the film was a thinly disguised version of Edwards. Bing's Decca recording of the song was part of a Gus Edwards medley. A Crosby blow-up of the song exists with improvised lyrics not quite appropriate for singing to a group of kids!

JOHNSTON, ARTHUR (JAMES) (1898-1954) Composer. Arthur Johnston was employed to provide the music for mainly Paramount movie assignments which in Bing's case covered the years 1933 to 1937. He is responsible for some of the best loved Crosby ballads of all time, as this C.V. will show. Just before the Paramount



Bing sings as Arthur Johnston plays one of his song hits.

connection he collaborated with Sam Coslow on "Just One More Chance" for the Sennett short *One More Chance* in 1931. Paramount had Bing record the same song for another 1931 release, *Confessions of a Co-ed*, but the song never made it to the release print. Johnston and Coslow received their first Crosby feature assignment in 1933 with *College Humor*. "Just One More Chance" received a reprise in that film together with three new songs - "Moonstruck", "Down the Old Ox Road" and "Learn to Croon". Bing gained some soundtrack mileage from the last title when he was heard, but not seen, singing it in *Duffy's Tavern* (1945) and *Jolson Sings Again* (1949). The same duo wrote the entire score for *Too Much Harmony* (1933). Four songs from that one became Crosby standards. They were "Thanks", "The Day You Came Along", "Black Moonlight" and "I Guess It Had To Be That Way" although only the first two were sung by Bing in the film. A couple of additional Crosby vocals from the film never made it to wax: "Buckin' the Wind" and "Boo-boo-boo". However that last trifle provided the opportunity for Bing and the composers to appear on screen together when Paramount plugged the picture in a *Hollywood on Parade* short the same year and Coslow and Johnston accompanied the Crosby vocal. Johnston and Coslow also wrote a song for Bing's next Paramount Picture - *We're Not Dressing* (1934). The title was "Live and Love Tonight" but it was not used in the film. Two years later Johnston was used by Columbia to write the music to Johnny Burke's words for *Pennies From Heaven*. Another quartet of Crosby classics were the result: "One, Two, Button Your shoe", "Let's Call a Heart a Heart", "So Do I" and of course the title song. The latter turned up a quarter of a century later in another Columbia film, *Pepe*, when Bing sang a snatch of it to Cantinflas in a short medley. Johnston's last work on a Paramount/Crosby flick was again in collaboration with Johnny Burke. Bing sang three of their songs in the 1937 *Double or Nothing*. They were "The Moon Got in My Eyes", "It's the Natural Thing to Do" and "All You Want to Do is Dance". After *Double or Nothing* Johnston did no further writing for Hollywood films. The above lists a good dozen plus standards. If they were released on an album they would emphasise the importance of Johnston in the first decade of Bing's vocal career.

JONES, PAUL (1901-1968) Producer. For the first half of Bing's most successful decade at the box-office, Jones was a producer at Paramount, overseeing some big money earners for that studio. His Crosby pictures covered *Road to Zanzibar* (1941), *Road to Morocco* (1942), *Dixie* (1943) and *Road to Utopia* (filmed 1944 and released 1946). You can see that his forte was comedy. He worked exclusively at Paramount and his other work in the comedy genre included *My Favourite Blonde* (1942) and *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1946), both with Bob Hope, *The Caddy* (1953) and *Pardners* (1956), both with Martin and Lewis, and *Who's Minding the Store* (1963) and *The Disorderly Orderly* (1964), both with Lewis alone. Jones' life was spent in Hollywood. He started as an assistant director, progressed to being a writer, moved up to associate producer and then spent a quarter of a century producing films which made us laugh.

JOOBALAI Song. There's a rousing moment in *Paris Honeymoon* (1939) where Bing joins festival revellers in singing this Leo Robin-Ralph Rainger composition. The melody had a feel to it which created the impression that it was a traditional song that had been around a century or so.

JOSLYN, ALLYN (1901-1981) Actor. His only Crosby picture was *If I Had My Way* (1940) when he played the part of Jarvis Johnson, the rich uncle of Gloria Jean, who wants nothing to do with his niece following the death of her father. He was rarely seen in a sympathetic role during his near forty years in Hollywood. He began his life as an entertainer on Broadway before breaking into movies in 1936. He was good at looking bewildered and brought his crumpled features to dozens of films including *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939), *The Shocking Miss Pilgrim* (1947) and *The Jazz Singer* (1953). His last film was in 1973, with most of the 1950s and 1960s finding him working in television on such series such as "The Ray Bolger show" and "The Addams family".

JUNE COMES AROUND EVERY YEAR Song. Johnny Mercer and Harold Arlen wrote two songs for *Out of This World*. This was one. Like the film's title song it has not stood the test of time considering the combined talents of its composers. In common with the other Crosby songs in this Paramount Picture, Bing's voice emanated from Eddie Bracken's mouth.

JUNE IN JANUARY Song. Bing's other "June" film song has stood the test of time and has been covered

by several balladeers in addition to Crosby since if was first sung in *Here is My Heart* (1934). Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger wrote it and Bing sings a duet with his own record of it in his hotel room in a memorable and enjoyable sequence. It also closed the film when the story's happy ending was reached and Bing duetted it with leading lady Kitty Carlisle.

JUST AN ECHO Short film. Paramount distributed this second of two Crosby twenty minute shorts made by Arvid E. Gillstrom Productions. The first one was *Please* and both were made in 1933 with the same cast and production staff. Bing is a country park ranger in *Just an Echo*. He falls for the head ranger's daughter, played by Mary Kornman, and in the closing minutes gets the girl.

JUST AN ECHO IN THE VALLEY Song. Featured, as you would expect, in the above film. Jimmy Campbell and Reg Connelly wrote the words to music by Harry Woods and all three benefited from snatches of the song being used another couple of times in 1933. In Paramount's *College Humor* it formed part of a medley when Bing provided a musical illustration of great dramatic love scenes and he also sings a few lines in *Going Hollywood*. Bing regarded it as a significant part of his early musical career and re-recorded it for his musical autobiography in 1954.

'Just For You' Danish style - advert provided by Bertel Dueholm.

JUST FOR YOU Film. Technicolor was seen as an essential part of Paramount's non-dramatic productions from around 1950 and this 1952 film benefited from the process. Bing plays a widower whose life is preoccupied with writing songs and producing Broadway musicals. His son and daughter are neglected as a result of Bing's work and it takes a love affair between Crosby and Jane Wyman to bring about family harmony. The film's main treat is the score. It was Bing who arranged for Paramount to hire Harry Warren to write the music for the film. Warren's peak years were spent writing for Wamer Bros. in the thirties. The lyric writer was to have been Crosby crony Johnny Mercer. When he proved unavailable Bing chose another thirties songwriter - Leo Robin. Robin had collaborated with Al Dubin on some of Bing's earlier Paramount musicals. Crosby and Wyman duetted the Oscar nominated "Zing a Little Zong" twice and the song's popularity no doubt helped *Just For You* to register 17th in "Variety's" top money making films of 1952. The strong supporting cast list included Ethel Barrymore, nearing the end of her career and playing the headmistress of a girl's school and Natalie Wood getting into her acting stride as Bing's young daughter.

JUST FOR YOU Song. It is the title number from the 1952 film. As with the other songs in the film, the composers were veterans Leo Robin and Harry Warren. The song plays a pivotal part in the plot. In the film's story line it is written by Bing's son. He sends it to the singer played by Jane Wyman. She rejects the song but Bing gives it a try and is impressed by his son's abilities.

JUST ONE MORE CHANCE Song. This Sam Coslow - Arthur Johnston ballad had a Crosby related cinema career embracing forty plus years. It was first heard in the Mack Sennett short *One More Chance* (1931) in which Bing serenaded his film wife in a night club scene at the end of the one reeler. A clip from that film turned up in *Road to Hollywood*, an Astor Pictures compilation of Sennett shorts released in 1946. In the same year as the Sennett short was made Bing recorded the song for the Paramount feature *Confessions of a Co-ed* but the recording was not used. Two years later it did manage to make its Paramount Picture debut when it was included in a medley for *College Humor*. It was part of the same medley as "Just An Echo in the Valley", mentioned above. The song's final film outing to date was in the 1973 Paramount Picture *Paper Moon*. That film was set in the thirties and the Crosby recording was played on the radio in one scene.

KAHAL, IRVING (1903-1942) Lyricist. Bing sang just one Kahal song during his film career. That was "When I Take My Sugar to Tea", which was the opening song in the Sennett short *Dream House* (1931). "Sugar" was to wait until 1957 before Bing committed the song to wax for the "New Tricks" album with Buddy Cole. Kahal will be associated with two cinematic triumphs from the early thirties. He collaborated with Sammy Fain on both "You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me" which Maurice Chevalier sang in *The Big Pond* (1930) and "By a waterfall", which was a major production number in the Warner Bros. production *Footlight Parade* (1933).

One Sweet Letter From You

Members' views, opinions and comments are always welcomed and we have great pleasure in reproducing some of the letters received since the last issue

Scott Whalen, 5856 Hallridge Circus, Columbus, Ohio 43232-6497, USA

Received the latest issue of BING and enjoyed it immensely. I half expected this issue to be of the venerable kind and was mildly amused to find nary a mention of Bing and Christmas, other than the obligatory article on "White Christmas", "Holiday Inn", and within the CD reviews. Not that I'm complaining. I would imagine that after having constructed as many issues of BING as you have, you've probably seen your fair share of Bing disguised as Father Christmas to last you a lifetime.

The other day my wife and I were at Media Play, a store that sells music, movies and computer software and I was glancing through their collection of DVDs. In the comedy section, I found 'Road to Bali' and I began to wonder how many of Bing's movies are on DVD. The last edition of BINGANG stated that four of Bing's films were available in this form namely, 'Road to Morocco', 'Road to Utopia', 'Holiday Inn' and 'The Bells of St. Mary's. Are there any more? Incidentally Laser discs have become as scarce as the proverbial dodo here. Just about all Personal Computers now include a DVD/CD-Rom drive. It's quite amazing the amount of information that can fit onto a disc the size of an audio CD. Generally a two hour movie plus outtakes, bloopers, a complete soundtrack, production stills and audio commentary by either the director or one of the lead players. I think a Crosby DVD, done well, could be fantastic. I'd like to see the Sennett shorts coupled together and released in this format.

I believe that I came across several references to "The Chronological Bing Crosby" series and its inclusion of alternate tracks in the last edition of BING. It would seem that a general consensus is that the alternate tracks are annoying and needless. I would disagree. There are numerous CDs available containing many of Bing's released songs and it is refreshing to be able to listen to out takes and alternate takes of these tracks, especially if that alternate take is aurally different to its released version. These odd tracks are the true gems of each "Chronological Bing" CD. A particular added attraction are the "blow-ups," or "studio chatter." These tracks in and of themselves have very little if any reason to be included on any Bing compilation outside of the chronological variety, and the average listener or fan of Bing probably isn't missing much by not hearing them; but to someone who thoroughly enjoys the nuances of each Crosby tune, the alternate takes and blow-ups afford an opportunity to realize exactly what the musicians were attempting to capture when they entered the studio and "waxed" a recording. It also allows the listener to capture the mood of the musicians at the time of take 1, take 3, rejected take, etc. The rejected take of "We're a Couple of Soldiers" clearly defines the insanity of the musicians that particular day.

An added bonus to alternate takes occurs when that take is substantially different enough to come across as an entirely unique song altogether. No one seems to mind when Bing re-recorded tunes throughout the years, and I see no real difference between the re-recording of a tune twenty minutes after the fact or twenty years later, other than the maturation of Bing's vocal prowess. The quicker, up-tempo take 8 of "It Won't Be Long Now," contrasted with the much slower and dopier take 4 of the same song is a perfect example. Same tune, recorded the same day, but entirely different animals, so to speak.

Doreen Heasman's letter condemning Bing's use of colorful language during his disagreement with Jack Kapp was disheartening, to say the least. She alludes to an illusion of a perfect Bing Crosby being destroyed by the inclusion of this track on "what promised to be such a worthwhile project..." I realize that nothing good ever comes from tarnishing a hero, but on the other hand, it is utterly fascinating to hear Bing Crosby not as the larger than life Der Bingle, but simply as Bing: a singer who was having the time of his life. To continuously paint a picture in which Bing is above a contemptible action is to deny a portion of his personality. I believe that in a studio out take of Bing and Bob Hope singing "Put It There, Pal," we hear Bing requesting "a ham-and-egg sandwich and a bottle of beer." In an ideal imagining of Bing, this would probably be a discoloration of a perfect picture of him: asking for a beer. Bing used colorful language; he smoked a pipe; he drank beer; he gambled, owned a racetrack as well as race horses; he did every mundane thing that the average individual did and still does. It is an unidealistic thrill to be able to listen to him within the recording studio, drunk as a lord, arguing with Jack Kapp in an adult manner. It is also hilarious!

There are several other blow-up recordings in which Bing uses "foul" language. Offhand I can only think of his many rejected takes with the Andrews Sisters and his 1939 recording of "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams," but I'm sure there are more. Each recording offers the listener a chance to experience the overall moods of Bing the artist and Bing the man. It adds to his personas rather than detracts. The twentieth century is littered with these personas. Leslie Townes Hope had Bob Hope. Archie Leach had Cary Grant. Gordon Sumner has Sting. And Harry Crosby had Bing. Maybe it is at the moment in which the dichotomy of Harry Crosby and Bing clashes that Doreen finds discomforting. There's no harm in this, I suppose, but it does in a sense forcefully ignore the

overall completeness of the man. Rather than detract from the legacy of Crosby, the Kapp argument adds to his uniqueness and this I wholeheartedly welcome. John McNicholas should be congratulated for including this track, and Radio 2 should be congratulated for broadcasting a side of Bing that, so many years after the fact, affords their listeners a chance to experience an entirely different Bing. Crosby should never be placed upon a pedestal nor within a box. To do so is to limit the enjoyment of his life and music.

Perhaps what it all boils down to is this: in order to keep Bing "alive" and in the public-eye well into the 21st century involves erasing an aging portrait of him. The Dorian Gray painting of him well hidden in the attic is beginning to show signs of ill-use. It just might be time to allow a new generation, disaffected as it might be, a chance to know Bing. If this means allowing a more colorful Bing to come forward, then so be it. I for one believe that it does little or no harm to allow each generation a chance to know greatness. As flawed as it can be. The Crosby/Kapp track does this beautifully.
(Editor: A superb letter from Scott who clearly feels as strongly as Doreen about the matter. Since the last edition of BING, Doreen has received a fulsome apology from the BBC for playing the Jack Kapp argument in which Bing appears to use the dreaded 'F' word. I agree with Scott about Bing being a human being and not a Saint but I equally in my view there is no need for us to go out of our way to highlight any of Bing's deficiencies. Let's continue to take a balanced view of Bing. He did some things he must have regretted afterwards and also he did a lot of very good things which he kept to himself. All of us no doubt try to live good lives but we must all admit that we are not perfect and that sometimes we fall from grace. Bing was no different and as Scott says, perhaps when it is realised that he was a colourful personality and not a bland stereotype, we shall see a new generation discovering him.)

Keith Parkinson, Meadowcroft, Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St. Helens WA10 5LD

Kath's condition continues to improve and should see her fairly active again by next summer. There are things she won't be able to tackle again like lifting and gardening but we think our walking activities will resume, perhaps on a less strenuous basis.

There will be no complaints about the colour quality of issue 120. You can almost warm your hands on the business of the front cover. The contents are up to scratch as usual. Gary Giddins's promise of additional material for diary of a Lifetime ought to justify an updated reprint. Donel's Lines took me back to when going to the pictures was a very different experience to visiting today's multiplexes.

You were kind in your comments about Michael Freedland. I have always regarded him as this country's foremost scissors and paste biographer, although it seems that he's now filling in the gaps in his research with conjecture. As you say, this is taken as the gospel truth by those not in the know and it just results in the misinformation being passed on. The BBC uses Freedland from time to time and he is equally inadequate as a broadcaster. He contributed to a TV programme about Sinatra shortly after Sinatra's death and failed to add anything significant to the tribute. And whilst on the subject of broadcasting and bad-mouthing, I happened to listen to Bob Monkhouse on Desert Island Discs today. He told Sue Lawley he had written some material for Bing and before it was used Bing downed a bottle of whisky and finished up in a drunken state. Monkhouse has just published volume two of his autobiography so I'll wander into W.H. Smith's sometime to see if the incident is referred to in the book.

Enclosed is a taping of *Vacation Road to Minnesota* as referred to by Jon Oye. My copy came from Bob Roberts. We were honeymooning in London in 1968 when Ralph Harding collected us from our hotel to take us to see Bob in Chatham. Bob had received a package of the EP sized 33 rpm discs from the States that day and I believe Ralph was given an copy as well. You'll find the record of passing interest and not something that sees a turntable very often. I just play it on our wedding anniversary!
(Editor: The Bob Monkhouse story is indeed contained in his book and seems to be a complete fabrication to me. George Patmore sent me a photocopy of the Bing incident in which Monkhouse describes how Bing recorded a programme for the Light Programme in the 50s in which he sang ten songs accompanied by an orchestra conducted by Paul Fenoulhet. John Scott Trotter was allegedly with Bing and he managed to get Bing through the show even though Bing was very drunk. Bing visited London in 1950, 1952 and 1953 and it is possible that JST was with him in 1953. No record of the show as described can be found however and I suspect that the story has been made up perhaps following a meeting with Bing and JST. Why do people do these things? Oh yes - to make money! If I knew how to contact Bob Monkhouse I'd write to him and seek an explanation.)

Jim Byrne, 9 Earhart Park, Steelestown, Derry BT48 8FN, Northern Ireland
I have just received my copy of BING 120 and would like to say that, as usual, it is full of very interesting articles and information from end to end, and up to its usual high standard. Many thanks for this.

I would like to tell you about a competition that was held on a TV programme called KELLY recently. This is a weekly Ulster Television show hosted by Gerry Kelly. It's a sort of chat show and very popular. Anyhow, about the beginning of December, Kelly announced that he was running a competition for amateur singers who could sing 'White Christmas' like Bing Crosby. There was an entry of 150 people from all over Ireland (including 3 women). All of these people were auditioned and ten were selected and appeared on the Kelly show on December 11. From these ten, four finalists were selected and they appeared on the Kelly show on December 18. A telephone vote was carried out to decide the winners. Incredibly more than 10,000 people voted and the winner, Percy Harmon, a retired taxi driver from Dublin, got 35% of the

votes. It all ended with each of the four finalists singing 'White Christmas'. The whole thing was very enjoyable and it was interesting to note that the competitors ages ranged from 22 to 60+. They all gave a fair account of themselves.
(Editor: Amazing! It is publicity like this that will have helped 'White Christmas' back into the charts last December and fancy 10,000 people voting. And whilst on the subject of 'W. C'...)

Les Brice, 40 Crown Rd., Clacton on Sea, Essex CO15 1AT
Just a few lines to thank you and all the gifted crew who make up the greatest Bing magazine that I am sure the world has ever seen!! It gets better with every issue and I never realised how little I knew about Bing till I get the next issue of BING. Truly great stuff! I really never expected the club to survive after the demise of Reg Bristo. He must have been a very hard act to follow, a sort of benign dictator, though of course still a dictator. As I grow older, 70 last month, I am becoming much more aware that my earlier opinions were not always correct. To friends in the Crosby world, I always referred to anything prior to 1939 as the 'dark days' but now, with the gift of experience, realise that this was a period of great 'Crosby'. Reg, alas, never got over his pet hates, even with time. 'Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings' to him was like waving a red rag at a bull, yet other rather 'blary' tracks to him were quite acceptable.

It was a delight to see 'White Christmas' at No,. 32 in Woolworth's chart. I wasn't going to, but when I saw the single in the chart racks, I just had to get it. I already have it five times as a 45 single, one of which is a picture disc, and 21 times on normal CD and LP. I also have the 1942 version eight times on 78, LP and CD, but you can't resist it when it's in the charts.

Again my sincere thanks for all you, and the other great intellects, do for us through the pages of BING.
(Editor: Well, what can I say but many thanks Les. I'll bet many members picked up 'White Christmas' again. My daughters bought it for me for Christmas.)

John Bignell, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex, HA0 2QB

I notice that May Hurcombe apparently says she detects a 'male bias' within the pages of BING. Not sure what she means but perhaps it is the fact that over the years Bing has always been and always will be the singer with which more men identify than any other? But certainly there is enough evidence within the pages of BING to suggest we have a very strong following on the distaff side. On the other hand, it is surprising for a 'fan club' to have so few lady officers. How can we rectify this?
(Editor: An interesting thought from John. Etty Gits is of course the only lady amongst the management committee but so many ladies like Laura Wiggins, Maggie Ryan and Gwen Harvey to name a few at random do so much for the club. It would be nice to have some more ladies holding 'office' and volunteers would be welcomed.)

John Benstead, 83 Pynfolds Estate, Jamaica Rd., Rotherhithe, London SE 16
Just a comment on the Celluloid Crosby article in BING #120. Larry Hagman was already a school boy of at least 10 or 11 years when 'Holiday Inn' went into production. Otherwise a fascinating piece! I was amazed to read 'High Society' being put on as a children's matinee.
(Editor: John is quite right and according to my records, Larry Martin Hagman (the son of Mary Martin and Ben Hagman) was born on September 21, 1931 whilst Mary Heller Halliday (the daughter of Mary and Richard Halliday) was born on November 4, 1941. So it was Heller that Mary Martin was carrying whilst making 'Birth of the Blues' and so could not make 'Holiday Inn' with Bing.

On a different subject, I was amused to receive the following e-mail....)

Elsa Sharp
I am a producer on *The Big Breakfast,* which is on Channel 4 in Britain every weekday morning. Every week on *The Big Breakfast* we feature a young person who is passionate about an hobby or habit normally associated with someone older. This is a popular and regular part of the show, we have featured an Archers Fan, a Radio Ham, a Jimmy Young Fan and a 14 year old Morris Minor fanatic and last week a nine year old Sherlock Holmes fan. We would like to invite a young Bing Crosby fan on the show. Ideally he/she should be between the ages of 8 - 12 years old and should be a real character, knowledgeable and enthusiastic with lots of memorabilia. They can come from anywhere in Britain. We would arrange travel and accommodation. Do you know anyone who fits the bill? If so can you put me in touch with them as soon as possible?
(Editor: I had to reply in the negative but if their is anyone out there who fits the bill, please let me know as soon as possible.)

PHILLIP CROSBY IS BACK!

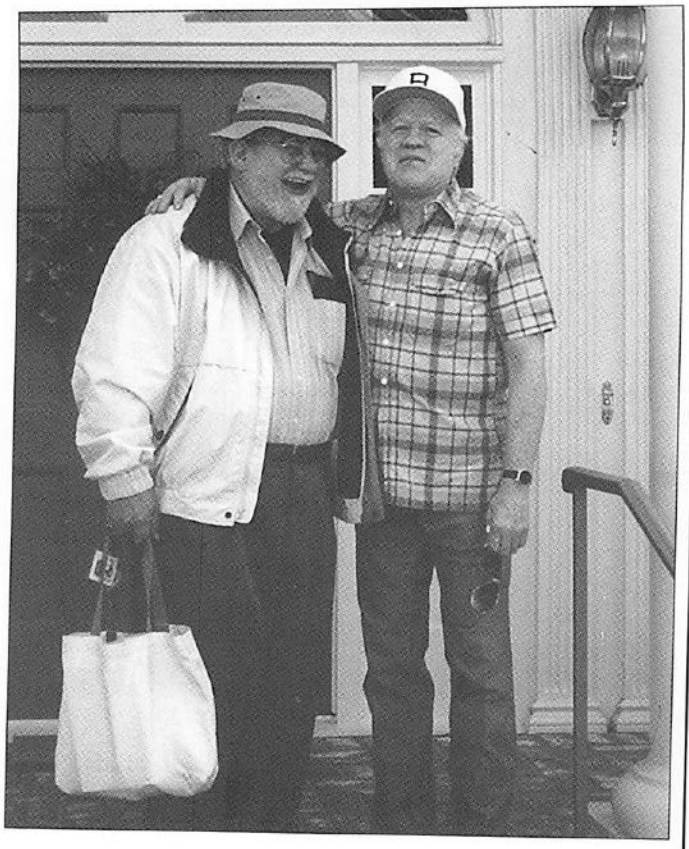
In the last edition of BING, Roger Osterholm described his involvement with the E! Entertainment Network on the programme about Bing. Matters proceeded somewhat as Roger now tells us.

I arrived in Hollywood late on Saturday afternoon, October 31, 1998, picked up a rental car, drove ten miles down La Cienga Street nearly to Sunset Boulevard, and found my hotel, the intimate Beverly Plaza on Third Street, two blocks east of Cienga. The next morning I arose early—the time zone was, after all, three hours later—and easily parked off Wilshire Boulevard, outside the Entertainment Television Building, for it was only 9 a.m. on a Sunday. By 10:30 Daniel Schwartz, the producer with E! Television with whom I would work for the next two days, discovered me in the main reception room and took me up to the thirteenth floor.

Yes, they had a real Floor 13, and half of it was devoted to the "Mysteries & Scandals" series. That day I spent

nearly five hours taping comments on Bing Crosby. I commented on every aspect of Bing's life I could think of. Maybe the greatest mistake I made was saying that Dixie had confessed to Michael Redgrave in 1948 that she was dying of cancer, when it was actually a story told by Michael Wilding. I told E! a week later, however, that they could retain the error if they could not cover for it and the overall story seemed important to their program.

The next day was the interview with Phillip Crosby at the home his father designed back in 1936. I met Danny's beautiful associate producer, Alison Martino, the daughter of the great crooner Al Martino. Then, after retrieving a copy of my book on Bing, which I planned on giving to Phillip but had forgotten in my room, and lunch with Danny at Marie Callender's, I drove myself to the former Crosby home.



Phillip and Roger at the front door of the Camarillo Street house

I parked my white car on the estate, inside the solid steel fence and across the driveway from the main door of a colonnaded white house. A man emerged from a large vehicle I had passed in the drive and walked toward me. He carried a large navy blue bag and a "tube" and was with an attractive woman dressed in a long skirt. I asked him, "Are you the audio man?" "No, I'm Phil Crosby," came the laughing response. The lady, who looked about 30, was delighted with my mistake.

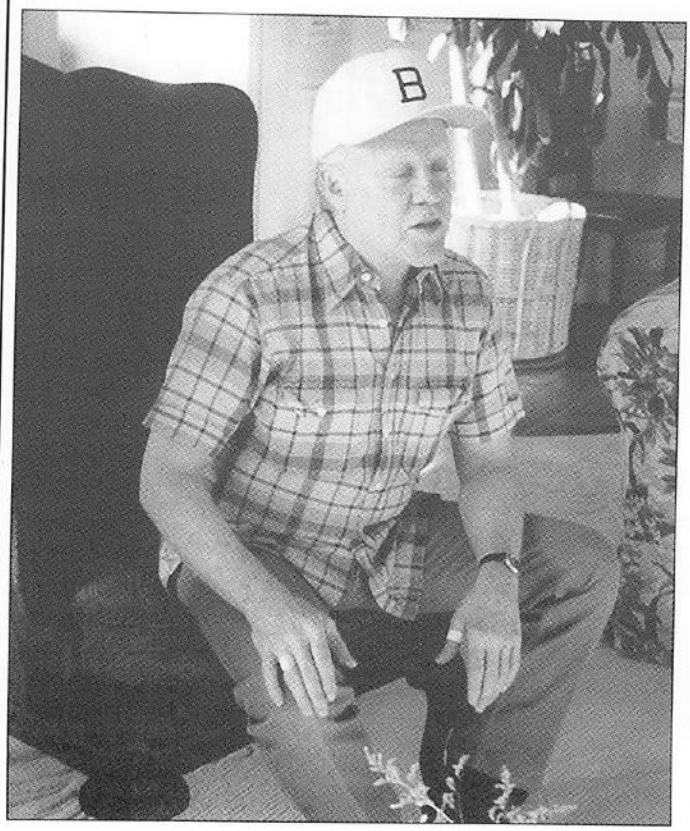
Phil wore a plaid short-sleeve shirt and a white baseball cap with a large "B" above the visor. He told me the letter stood for Bellarmine Academy, the secondary school he and his brothers had attended. He also wore blue jeans and black motorcycle boots with silver rings on the sides.

We heartily embraced, and I realized the "tube" was a cane. He was in good form, slender and looking solid, although he walked gingerly on weakened legs. Still, he did not use the cane.

The lady was Kerry Stickney, the publicist who with her husband, Larry, had bought the former Crosby estate in November 1997 from the previous owner, Jerry Van Dyke. Jerry is a client of Kerry. She agreed to snap a photo of me greeting Phil, and then she took another of Phil and me at the front door. Kerry and Phil have become close friends and she was the intermediary in arranging the interview with Phil which she generously allowed Entertainment Television to film in her fabulous home.

So after two weeks of anticipation, I finally had the pleasure of meeting Phillip Lang Crosby, the "second son" of Bing and Dixie Lee, on Monday afternoon, November 2, 1998, in Toluca Lake at the Camarillo Street estate that was purchased in 1936 by Bing. Phil explained that he was born on July 13, 1934, one and a half minutes ahead of his twin brother Dennis Michael, so that he was technically the second child of the couple. And, yes, he spells his name "Phillip," with two L's. The "Lang," of course, comes from Eddie Lang, Bing's favorite guitarist, accompanist, and close friend, who died following a tonsilectomy in 1933.

I have the wrong spelling of "Phillip" in my 1994 book, *Bing Crosby: A Bio-Bibliography* (Greenwood Press), but Phil understood. He said that when he was about six he showed his mother his "new" name with only one L. Dixie Lee firmly took him aside and said that she and Bing had named him Phillip, with two L's, and that was the way it would be, although later Kathryn Crosby, Phil's stepmother, always spelled it with one.



We walked through the large foyer or entry way, through a portal that was really a barrel vault, into the large living room at the center rear of the main building. A large fireplace punctuated the far end of the room. There Phil sat in a stuffed chair and I sat in another while we chatted. He pointed behind him, to the right side of the room, where the infamous Christmas tree ignited that fateful day in 1943 when the house was destroyed for the first time.

The gracious lady of the house offered us soda, coffee, and cookies while the crew set up and Phil and I chatted intently. I became amazed at how long it can take for a film crew to set up their equipment, but I felt as though I had encountered a long-lost brother. Phil and I talked for almost an hour before the shooting commenced. I presented him with an inscribed copy of my book on his father. I also showed him, at the request of Malcolm Macfarlane, my copy of Mac's book *Bing: A Diary of a Lifetime,* and asked if he would accept a copy. He said he would be honored to receive a copy of that book as well.

He told me that "Uncle Bob" was a great friend, and he did not mean Bing's brother. Phil went twice on long tours to Vietnam for the U.S.O. with Bob Hope. He said that evidently they needed a warm body to distract the audience while the beautiful girls changed clothes. Phil's modesty is clearly inherited from Bing. Phil is now 64 and looking forward to collecting Social Security.

Phil dropped the line with only a trace of exaggeration that Bob Hope had bought three quarters of the San Fernando Valley, and Mae West bought up the remaining quarter, making them both fabulously wealthy.

Phil said that on that fateful Christmas season of the famous fire, his mother instructed the boys on the proper way of unplugging the strings of lights from the Christmas tree, to pull the sockets away from the dry branches before disconnecting them, but "someone" knew better. He pulled one set apart near the trunk, caused a spark, which ignited the parched tree, and the fire soon brought down the whole house. That "someone," he said, was Gary.

He also pointed out the closet inside the front door, to the left in the foyer, as the place where, as soon as Bing arrived home after the fire, he found perhaps $5000 rolled into the toe of a scorched sport shoe. Most sources suppose the amount was $1500, money saved for the horse track.

Phil said he has been married three times, has had four children, and has six grandchildren. I heard him talk mostly about his grown daughter, Dixie Lee, who has children of her own. These and other Crosbyites have visited the Stickneys several times. The agreement among the four sons was that the first to have a daughter would have the honor of naming her Dixie Lee, a "contest" that Phil won. One of his sons, Brian Patrick, died several years ago in a motorcycle accident.

Ms. Stickney took me on a full tour of the 2.5 acres of the property, through the large guest house, through the large cabana at its rear and fronting the 30-foot pool. Behind the pool was the tennis court, complete with its own three-level viewing stand. These items were along the right side of the rear of the house, which faded back about 300 feet. This right-hand division was marked especially by 60-year old roses that Dixie had coddled, most of them yellow or salmon colored. Phil said that Bing built a home for his mother and father diagonally across the street.

The widest part behind the house is the center, with a lawn going back about 75 feet, including a notable walnut tree, and then, behind a line of tall cedar trees, stands an orange grove and more land. Along the left side of the back yard is the garden nursery and then the long area where the Stickneys learned from neighbors that the Crosbys held many happy clambakes. There were two or three holes in the ground that still yield clam shells, and I took two as a souvenir. I recalled my own youth in the 1940s when clambakes were very common and fashionable.

Then Kerry and I were called in for the filming. I was as pleased as possible with the camaraderie that developed between Phil and me. I hope he felt as pleased as I was.

Danny Schwartz had the crew set up in the foyer, with the camera at the left in the dining room, focusing on Phil on a stool and not showing the person asking the questions. I sat hunched to the left in a doorway, to keep my shoulder out of camera angle.

I asked the first questions, concerning Phil's childhood and schooling. His first memories were of living at Rancho Santa Fe, near San Diego. I asked him about a canary, and he immediately recalled that about 1941 he had taken a step ladder to reach a prized bird that Dixie Lee kept in the chandelier of the living room. Proud of his initiative, he soon found that the head of the bird was "loose." Gary tells this story a bit differently, but Phil recalls that his mother was so upset at the death of her canary that she told Phil, "Go away. I don't ever want to see you again."

The stories may have been going a bit slowly for Danny, for he took over to ask several more questions about the family life and any "curse" in the family. Danny asked Phil to be short and pungent with his answers. Phil explained that the sons were disciplined, but no worse than most families in those days, and that he rejected the idea of any curse.

Phil was careful to stress that Gary was a mean, angry, lazy, and lying person who would say anything to get his way or to get out of trouble. Phil was definite that much of what Gary said about their father in his 1983 book was malicious libel. Although he would not buy the book, Phil "kept all 17 installments" of it from the National Enquirer, perhaps exaggerating the number of issues.

He said that he believes that at least one of the suicides of Lindsay and Dennis, if not both, was an accident while

playing with guns while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. He also explained that they had all seen enough of hunting and culling herds with rifles to know that shooting oneself was very messy and not a desirable option for suicide, certainly not when drugs or running the engine of an automobile in a closed garage was so available. He made some good sense on this point.

Lindsay did have a psychological problem, which Bing could hardly understand. Phil said that Bing never had serious trouble in his own life and that left him unprepared in trying to understand Lin's manic-depressive problem.

I asked Phil two final questions, concerning Bing's jazz and generosity. Phil replied that Mel Torme and others thought Bing the greatest jazz singer of them all, and that Bing loved jazz much more than crooning love songs. Crooning, however, paid better. And, yes, Bing was generous. When Dixie died the four sons each received support from her trust, which continues to this day. Then Phil threw in that maybe Dixie Lee was a better singer than Bing, for the son often listens to her records and concludes that she was a very fine singer indeed.

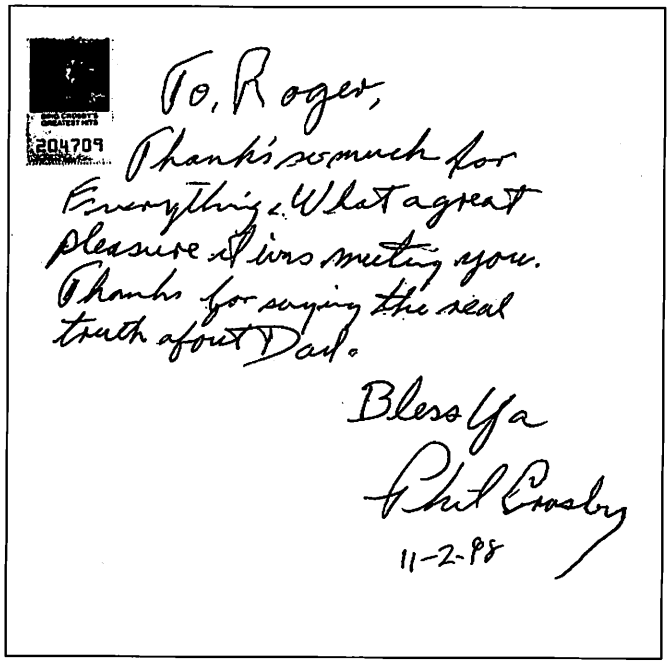
Phil added that, although the value of the trust has dwindled, the four sons were treated generously, and if they had financial troubles, they were brought on by themselves, especially through poor investments. He added that some people thought that the suicides may have been prompted by the dwindling inheritance, but he stressed that they all had friends and each other to help in any financial problem. He definitely thought that the suicides were unintentional. When Gary's book was published, Phil Harris, a close friend to Bing, also said that Bing arranged to leave the sons money when they turned 65, which would be 1999 for Phillip, if the arrangements are fact.

The home and grounds themselves are imposing, despite a troubled history. The house was completely burned down on January 3, 1943, and, although Bing loved his creation, the scarcity of supplies in those early years of the Second World War made it impossible to rebuild very promptly. That was when the Crosbys moved to 594 South Mapleton Drive, Holmby Hills, in Beverly Hills, a house since torn down by Aaron Spelling and replaced with a French Renaissance-style mansion that must be worth $45 million or more. Phil said that their new house had no pool, but the front lawn was large enough for a football game.

I'm no competent evaluator, but the Camarillo Street estate must be worth between $6 million and $12 million. This house was first rebuilt with fewer columns at the front and with dormers instead of a full second-floor faÁade. These compromises were caused by the scarcity of building materials in 1943, but the inside was surprisingly meticulously recreated. Phil pointed out a few variations, with a patio now enclosed and a fireplace replaced with large French doors in one downstairs room.

The house suffered a second catastrophe when, about a half dozen years ago, an earthquake took its fury out on the house, nearly killing Jerry Van Dyke and his wife. A chimney in the second floor master bedroom fell over and was held above the four-poster bed in which the couple slept. Otherwise the collapsing bricks would have killed them. And the main house was rebuilt again.

Shortly after 4:30 Phil said he had to get home. The TV crew took two shots of him leaving the house, shots that appeared to be "mood shots" or visuals for the credits. He still took the time, however, when he went back inside to retrieve his bag and cane, to inscribe a thoughtful note for me in my copy of my book on Bing. Phil wrote: "To Roger, Thanks so much for everything. What a great pleasure it was meeting you. Thanks for saying the real truth about Dad. Bless ya, Phil Crosby."


To, Roger,
Thanks so much for
Everything. What a great
pleasure it was meeting you.
Thanks for saying the real
truth about Dad.
Bless ya
Phil Crosby
11-2-98

Then Phil walked to his large "vehicle." I asked the sound technician what it was, and he called it an "urban assault vehicle." It was a large sport utility vehicle model GMC 1500. As Phil drove past the front door, stopped, and rolled the window down, I stepped out to tell him what the audio man had called the van, and he drove off laughing.

Three final notes. When I was the head of the Humanities Department at Central New England College in Worcester, Massachusetts, I corresponded with Bing and tried to bring him there for an honorary degree—incidentally, some sources say that Bing's grandfather Nathaniel was born in Worcester. Bing wrote me that he did not deserve an honorary degree, despite accepting one in 1937 from Gonzaga University. He wrote, "I'm just a crooner, and that's about as far as I go." After Bing's death in 1977, however, Bob Hope came in 1979 and accepted a Doctorate in Comedy in honor of Bing. About five years later I also induced Hope to come to my new college home, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida, and accept another honorary degree.

And speaking of Daytona Beach, Phil said he would like to see the famous racetrack. Of course, I told him to come anytime and visit with my wife and me. We hope

Lewis and DeFlores described Bing's fall from the stage after filming his 50th anniversary special, and his death in 1977 after a golf game. Lewis also quoted Gary as saying then, "It was typical of Bing. Nothing was ever tough for him, not even dying."

Near the end of the show we see Phillip's statement that he does not believe that Lindsay and Dennis actually meant to commit suicide, but may have done so mainly as accidents with guns. Sadly, Phillip explained that he repaired Dennis's shotgun before the tragedy.

Bob Thomas stated that Bing "had not time to be a father," but that is not entirely true. Bing put a lot of effort into being a father, even during the war when he took Gary with him on bond tours.

The final word was Phillip's: "You couldn't ask for a better father. He taught me how to fish" and many other important activities. "He was the greatest father in the world." Finally, even A.J. moderated his negative implication merely by saying, "Bing may not have been a perfect parent, but he fathered one hell of a career."

Now we need an hour show to demonstrate the rest of the story, that Bing, although reticent and shy with his feelings, was decent and caring, even when carousing in the 1920s. He wanted to play, he was unable to vent praise and emotion, but he never hurt anyone. I am convinced that Bing was so firmly centered and definite in his values that he did not have to think about them. His life followed naturally from them, and his works in fishing, golf, horse racing, show dogs, hunting, ranching, encouraging inventions, building wings for many B-17s, charities, producing films and TV shows, and many writings are too numerous for even a four-hour special. Maybe someday we shall once again care to hear the truth and celebrate a true entertainment giant, colossal in talent and decency.

A producer at an Orlando television station said in 1995 that they were not interested in any programs on Bing, because Gary had recently been there and described how Bing was sadistic and beat the four sons and Dixie too with fiendish glee. And they, like Sue Cameron, seem to want to believe it. This is also the popular opinion, showing the amazing effects of Gary's book and the distortions manufactured by Bing's old partner Al Rinker and also exaggerated in that hostile 'Hollow Man' book. No one seems to have any credible and significant scandalous information against Bing. But we should not expect much reasonableness when the public can be served juicy scandals.

The show will be rebroadcast often. If you are on the Internet, go to www.eonline.com to find the biography of A.J. Benza and the broadcast schedule. You may also go to my Web site at www.civilized.org to find a page devoted to Crosby and these shows, which will also list scheduled airings as soon as I learn of them.

The "Bing Crosby" show is No. 62 of "Mysteries & Scandals" series on E!. Some of its credits include Executive Producer Michael Danahy, Executive in Charge of Productions Betsy Rott, Producer Daniel A. Schwartz, Associate Producer and Music Coordinator Alison Martino, Writer Laura Slobin, and Research Producer Michael Seligman. Some of the thanks went to Bob DeFlores Film Archives, George McCabe Collection, Ron Hall and Festival Films, Vern Taylor, Bill Daugherty, Mark Scrimger, Kerry Fretty-Stickney, Hobie and Cathy Wilson, Bing's Friends and Collectors Society, and Arne Fogel.

The show was disappointing because of its negative content and how unfortunate that malicious people like Cameron had to be involved. It did however give a platform to Phillip Crosby to put his side of the story and it's good to have him back!

Roger Osterholm

(Editor: Our thanks are due to Roger for taking us through the whole affair and also giving his own detailed comments on the show. There were many views expressed on the bulletin board of the Bing Crosby Internet Museum and with grateful thanks to Steven Lewis I reproduce extracts from several of these below.)

"E's Bio of Bing gave us a chance to see a more objective perspective of Bing as a normal old fashioned father, which is something I can relate to.....The way the program MC, Mr. Benza, presented his material kinda rubbed me the wrong way. Maybe that is show biz? All in all, the program, was too short."

Jack Mallon

"Jack, I agree with you on most of your points, particularly about the host. I think it was his 'tone'. I guess we have to remember that the name of the series is 'Mysteries and Scandals' therefore the host and his director feel obligated to add an edge of 'scandalous' judgmental attitude to the script and delivery of the host's comments and remarks. All in all, I think it was fair in that Phil Crosby certainly got an opportunity to defend his Dad.....It was good to see Steven, and I agree that he did a great job, as did my friend Bob DeFlores. Bottom line: Bing was acknowledged as the great artist he was, and that's a good thing."

Arne Fogel

"I'm pleased the E! biography turned out well. The biography was produced and aired in record time. Bob DeFlores and I were interviewed October 31 at the E! studios along Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles and Phillip was interviewed at his former Los Angeles home the following week by Roger Osterholm. Bob and I were interviewed on camera for about two hours each, yet only a couple minutes ended up in the show. So much more could have been included if Bing had had the two hours that was devoted to Steve McQueen's biography after the Monday broadcast. Originally I was told not to expect the show to be broadcast until January, but, appropriately, E! decided to premier the show Christmas week. In my initial contact with E! last October I was told only that E! wanted to do a biography of Bing. Would I be willing to help? A week later I decided to withdraw my assistance when I heard that Bing's bio would be part of a series

called "Mysteries and Scandals." But the producer, Danny Schwartz, convinced me he was no hatchet man — that he wanted to put a balanced program together, and I thought he accomplished that. The rather dark set-up to the program lifted near the end, replaced by the spirit of redemption. The host, by the way, displays the same attitude in each episode.

Phillip is quite a contrast to Gary — day and night. Gary portrays his father as Darth Vader, Phillip calls him the most wonderful dad in the world. Gary blamed the suicides of his siblings on Bing, Phillip denies they were suicides at all. Does he think they were accidents? Murders? I have suggested to E! that the raw footage of Phillip's interview be donated to Gonzaga for use by future historians.

Phillip's perspective reveals that the boys' troubles were more than merely the result of harsh treatment by a distant father. The whole world treated Bing Crosby's sons different from other boys, and as Phillip revealed this was not necessarily good news for them.

Today I talked to the producer, Danny Schwartz, and congratulated him on his work. My one complaint regarded the inclusion of a statement in the program that Dixie may have known she was dying of cancer as early as 1948. Dixie was diagnosed with terminal ovarian cancer as a result of exploratory surgery in June of 1952. She died within 6 months of the diagnosis."

Steven Lewis

(Editor: Well said Steven. The reference to Dixie having cancer in 1948 comes from Kathryn Crosby's book ' My Life With Bing' - page v of the prologue - and I have always felt that the date was suspect.. Hobie Wilson was another who was involved with E!)

"Late in November Steven Lewis mailed us to let us know that the "E!" channel was planning to do a documentary on Bing and would we like to offer any help in the project? ~ I called the "E!" office at Steven's suggestion and spoke with producer, Danny Schwartz. After the usual formalities Mr. Schwartz was anxious to utilize certain elements from my 50+ years of Crosby collecting as well as my personal experiences with Bing and his family. I agreed to help provided that the program would present Bing in a fair and unbiased light. That is to say that any negativity be equally balanced with positive insights. Mr. Schwartz assured me that was the intent of the program and I felt over the 6 or 7 hours of phone conversations with him that he would not go back on his word.

Between trying to get out the 100th issue of BINGS FRIENDS AND COLLECTORS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER and the pressures of planning/participating in family holiday celebrations Cathie and I were able to provide "E!" with over 4.5 hours of taped Crosby music and scanned photos of Bing and family that are not widely known or seen. I also recommended to Mr. Schwartz that he contact Bob DeFlores and the COLLECTORS COLLECTOR Vern Wesley Taylor for other insights and information on Bing. Since we are not able to get "E!" channel in our area our daughter taped it for us and we were finally able to preview it on Christmas Eve.

All in all I felt that the program did a fair job in presenting Bing. Steven was articulate and succinct in his answers and I wish there had been more opportunity to hear from him I was impressed with Phillip for his revelations about his dad, Gary and the twins. I only wish he could have been more vocal when Gary was touting his book way back when.

Cathie and I met Gary on several occasions prior to his publishing of his book. In fact we spent several hours with him at Kathryn's auction and while he was personable and friendly I have to agree with Phillip that he tended to be a bit of a "whiner" when talking about his past and that while the Crosby name got him work in the entertainment field it also held him back from going further. (He didn't say whether the lack of talent had anything to do with his lack of work). Cathie and I became close friends of Bing's sister Mary Rose Pool and her husband Jim and during our visits she confirmed that Gary had on more than one occasion caused his own hard luck by blowing appointments for rehearsal dates, cutting classes and tutoring sessions and ultimately blaming all his misfortunes on Bing. Despite the fact that Bing was at the helm encouraging him to succeed and using his influence to assist Gary in what he wanted to do, Gary never did seem to get it! I guess the guy was more to be pitied than scorned. I think he ended up a very unhappy man.

I think at this juncture I have added my two cents to the list of "E!" channel opinions. Not that I recall anyone asking me for my opinion! I believe that "E" did a fair job in doing the bio of Bing but as with folks we admire it was not nearly long enough. Bing's life may be ended..but damnit...THE MEMORY WILL CONTINUE TO LINGER ON and aren't we glad of that. "

Hobie Wilson, President
Bing's Friends & Collectors Society

(Editor: Many more of our USA based members will have seen the programme and further comments will be appreciated.)

he comes soon. My nearby brother-in-law, who is of Irish descent—possibly no detriment—is fascinated with motorcycles and racing himself. So if I did not know what Phil might ask about racing, at least I would have some local support.

The way I obtained Hope's address back in 1975 is itself amusing and indicative of Bing. My elder son, Jon, then seven, wrote Bing a brief note, saying he just watched *Road to Bali,* liked the part where they took a bow and fell over, and that he would someday watch the whole film. Then he asked Bing for the comedian's address. Three weeks later Jon received a personal note from Bing, giving him Hope's Moorpark Street address.

Roger Osterholm

(Editor: Our thanks go to Roger for his fascinating account of the meeting with Phillip and much to Roger's surprise the E! show was transmitted somewhat earlier than expected in December. Wig has already expressed his disappointment with the show but because of the apparent controversy it has caused I asked Roger to give his views as a participant.)

MYSTERIES & SCANDALS

The half-hour program on Bing produced for Entertainment Television aired in America just before Christmas, a full month ahead of schedule. The executive producer of the series saw an early cut on December 16 and ordered it broadcast in the next few days.

It provides the candid comments of Phillip Crosby, and as I have described, Phillip, who looks fit and in good humor, is shown being interviewed in the foyer of the home on Camarillo Street. Perhaps the show was rushed a bit, but its character, with some hostility and negativity toward Bing, would have survived even with more deliberate editing. It was, after all, a half hour TV show in a series called "Mysteries & Scandals," and the most remarkable point must be that about half of it was positive or favorable at all. And in a half hour TV program, we seldom receive full clarifications and portrayals of any subject.

In fact, the half hour show had three two-minute breaks for commercials, so the air time was only 24 minutes. Yet, some interesting and fascinating images and points were established in that brief time. It may be helpful to those of you in the UK who have not seen it, if I describe the main parts of the show.

The major on-screen sources for the show were Steven Lewis, the Internet biographer of Bing; Bob Thomas, a reporter with the Associated Press and author of the book titled *The One and Only Bing*; Bob DeFlores, a film preservationist; Sue Cameron, a rumormonger and author of *Love, Sex and Murder*; and me, a biographer. The host was the venerable A.J. Benza, who self-consciously portrays the film noire style of a Humphrey Bogart. His style alone speaks of gossip and dark secrets. A.J. (Alfred Joseph) was a gossip columnist from 1992 to 1997 with the New York Daily News and recently has appeared in a few films.

The program itself highlighted some rare films and photographs of Bing, including one of his Gonzaga University class in about 1924, and also some of his recordings, like "The First Noel," "De Camptown Races," "Darling Nellie Gray," "Silent Night," "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly," and "Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral."

Steven Lewis mentioned that Bing was the dominant entertainer of the 1930s and '40s, but A.J. wasted no time in mentioning that in 1983, six years after Bing's death, his son Gary wrote "a tell-all book" that called Bing's favorable image into question. A carefully placed shot of Bing enjoying a bottle of beer, probably at a racetrack, was used for implicit comment.

Sue Cameron said that Gary was "almost in tears" as he told her that Bing "treated him like a military man" and beat "him to a pulp." Of course, Gary said many such things to many people, and, according to Phillip, hardly any of this is true. Phillip said that once a spanking left four welts on Gary's "big fat behind, and that was it."

My own comment that a talk show had an instalment titled "The Crosby Curse" made it sound as though I was calling the family cursed, for my following comment was cut and my sarcastic demeanor may not have been too apparent.

Still, A.J. mentioned that Bing had a great 50-year career as a "master entertainer" before suggesting that his appearance in 1954 on Edward R. Murrow's "Person to Person" show suggested the Bing was "a dark and troubled man." He did comment that his sons were not too bad, but "I got to kick them back into the corner once in a while." This comment may also be taken out of context, but Bing was just trying to sound basic and demanding.

A.J. pointed out that Bing learned his parenting skills from his own demanding parents, which is true, but the host made it sour by saying "dubious" skills. In the 1930s, however, nearly every concerned father acted just like Bing, if not much more severely. They had not the 'advantage' of Dr. Spock's permissive theories, and it is unreasonable to hold the old folks to current practices, some that seem very lax.

I retold Gary's story of being caned about 1950 when he broke the cane and told Bing that spankings had gone on long enough. I laughed heartily in telling the end of the vivid tale, and if it did happen somewhat as Gary said, I believe that even Bing would have seen much humor in it. Then I explained how hard Bing had to work as a child, with a paper route, an early morning janitor's job, and other work, but that more than anything else, Bing, when he became a young man, seemed to want to play, on the links and in night-clubs.

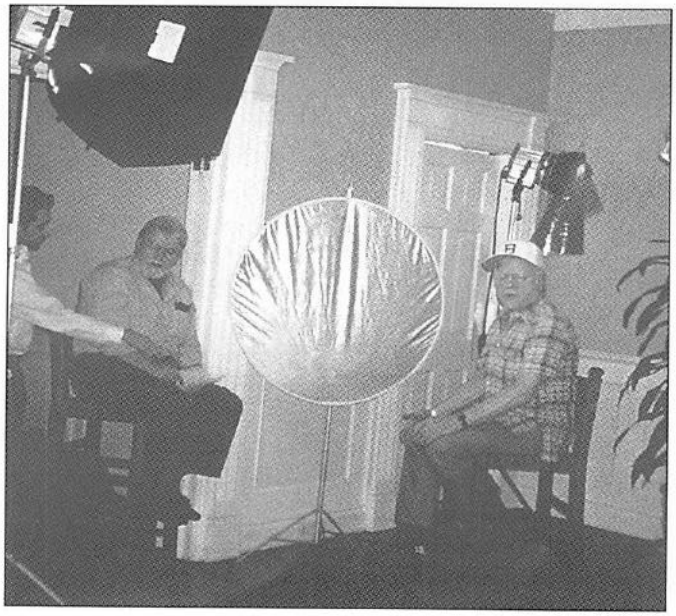
Bob DeFlores explained that Bing's decision in 1925 to try his luck in Los Angeles was courageous, and I

explained how Bing met Dixie while he sang with the Rhythm Boys at the Cocoanut Grove. They fell madly in love, although all of Dixie's friends told her that she would have to support this "half-baked" singer for the rest of her life. There is no question that at times Bing drank too much and liked it, a point confirmed by Bob Thomas.

Bob DeFlores told of the threatened divorce in 1931 and that Bing won Dixie back by singing "I Apologize" (or was it 'I Surrender Dear') over the phone.

Later I explained, "After Dixie's urging, he just stopped drinking and changed himself from a drunk to a sober, successful, talented singer and actor, out of will power." And this is the Crosby who became famous. The program did not show that Bing was always decent and that after 1932 his morality became obvious. A.J., however, said that behind his easygoing facade "Bing allegedly harbored a dark side."

This was when Cameron returned to say that there were rumors of Dixie's drinking, "And he used those rumors to cheat on her, and people would look the other way" out of pity for the poor crooner. If this is true, why have not some of these paramours come forward? We certainly know about illicit affairs of hundreds of other celebrities. Why not two or three of Bing before Dixie's death, if they exist?



Phillip Crosby and Roger Osterholm filming their contributions.

Phillip defended the four brothers as normal active boys, and that Bing did not want them to feel any better than any of their schoolmates. This was, as A.J. stated, when Bing was more popular than the Pope. The host continued, however, suggesting that the Road pictures with "the irrepressible Bob Hope and the sultry Dorothy Lamour" must have brought more turmoil into the Crosby family. Maybe not!

Steven Lewis and Bob Thomas discussed the Road pictures, and the host did say that Bing was nominated for an Oscar in 1945. However he did not mention that Bing was the most popular movie star for a record five consecutive years, from 1944 to 1948, and in 1949 he was second, behind only Bob Hope—but of course the brevity of the show did not permit stating these facts. Phillip recalled his thoughts when his father won the Oscar for the best actor. He said, "So I guess he isn't just a guy who sings, whistles, and smokes a pipe." He added that Bing often used the Oscar as a doorstop, showing how little the honor affected him.

DeFlores, Lewis, and Thomas then wondered how the sons and Dixie felt when Bing was so busy that his home life was stretched thin. Dixie turned to the bottle, added Lewis. But Dixie was also dying, which she may have known as early as 1948, according to Kathryn Crosby. She may have the date off by a year or two, but Bing does not deserve any criticism for not sharing such information with the public. If Bing knew more than a year or two before he has admitted, so what? There are many facts the public just has no right to know, and both Bing and Dixie were essentially private and modest people. As we know, Dixie died November 1, 1952.

Lewis explained that Gary, the eldest, caused most of the trouble and experienced most of the discipline. But it did not work, certainly not with headstrong Gary. Phillip stated that Gary "was a slacker and a whiner, and he was always mad at something." Then Lewis added that Bing admitted to using straps, belts, and canes in spanking his sons.

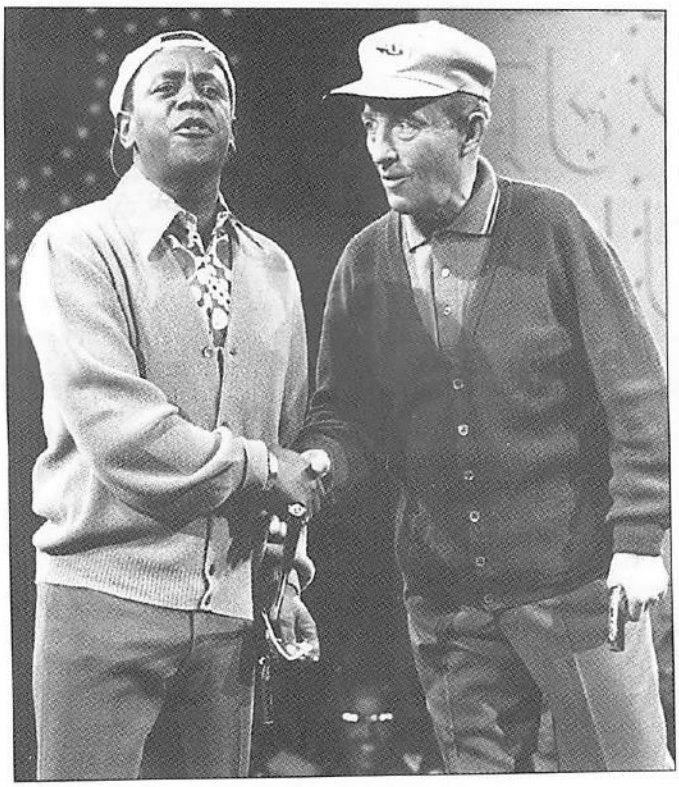
Cameron then became lurid. (What a pity she took part in the show!) She said, "These were beaten children. What shocked me, and I have pictures in my head, of belts flying and skin splitting open and blood coming out—and that was right. That's what Gary told me." Unfortunately, Gary's words do not make it true, and the grossness of the images belie their truth. Gary never said things were this bad in his many slanderous TV appearances discussing his upbringing, and even in his libelous book he never went that far. Perhaps Gary said these things to Cameron, but she should have used a little more sense in evaluating them. Phillip said that Bing never drew any blood in all his spankings.

Anyway, this situation did not bode well for the attempt of the four brothers to form a singing group called the Crosby Boys. They lasted about six months until, after a disastrous performance in Montreal, Lindsay smashed a drunken and abusive Gary in the face. Gary always accused Phillip of striking the solid blow, but by then no one would talk to Gary. I added that Gary wanted to become the new Elvis Presley, and "if he didn't he was going to blame everybody else. He couldn't even get along with his own brothers."

The rest of the show developed that Bing was a good father to his second family, and, according to Cameron, "That really drove the first family absolutely nuts." She overlooked, however, how much Bing continued to do for his first sons. Lewis mentioned this, stating that Bing never gave up on them and tried to help them in their various occupations.

ONCE IN A WHILE
The obituary section of the magazine.

Flip Wilson, the comedian died last November of liver cancer at the relatively young age of 64. Born Clerow Wilson in Jersey City, he was raised in foster homes and served four years in the Air Force where he began entertaining. After a decade working away in small clubs, he made his TV debut on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show in 1965. This led to frequent appearances on 'The Ed Sullivan Show' and 'Laugh-In' and in turn to his own series which ran from 1970 until 1974 and which earned him an Emmy for performing and one for writing in 1971. He was famous for his 'Geraldine' character whom Bing encountered on an appearance on the Flip Wilson Show of January 7, 1971. Bing also appeared on the show on March, 16, 1972. Flip took part in the 'Bing Crosby and Friends' stage show in San Francisco on June 2, 1976. He effectively retired from show business in the mid 1980s as he endeavoured to bring up his five children out of the spotlight.



Flip with Bing on a 1971 TV show.

Bob Haggart died in Venice, Florida last December after collapsing on his way to the post office. He was 84. During his long and varied career he performed with jazz greats such as Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington and of course Bing. He joined the Bob Crosby Orchestra soon after it was founded in 1935 and as bassist and arranger he was the group's guiding spirit until 1942. He subsequently worked as a freelance musician in New York and performed in the orchestras used in the Perry Como Show and the Tonight Show. Bing used Haggart's orchestra on several occasions when he was in New York, notably in December 1945 on tracks such as 'McNamara's Band' and 'Sioux City Sue'. Haggart was responsible for the music to Bing's song 'What's New?' and he also contributed most of the music to 'South Rampart Street Parade' which was a tremendous success for the Bob Crosby Band.

Lord Grade, an entertainment legend in his own life time, died of heart failure on December 13 at the age of 91. The son of immigrants from the Ukraine, Lew Grade gave up an early career as a dancer to start a small show-business agency office with his brother in 1934. By the mid 1950s he had stars such as Bob Hope, Judy Garland and Edith Piaf on his books. He was a founder of Associated Television, one of the first commercially funded channels to take on the BBC and he went on into film production in a big way. Bing does not seem to have been involved with him other than in 1977 when it was announced that Lew Grade would produce 'The Road to the Fountain of Youth' starring Bing and Bob Hope. As we know, Bing died before the film could be made.

Irene Hervey, the dimpled actress, died on December 20 from heart ailments at the age of 88. Perhaps best known for playing James Stewart's love interest in *Destry Rides Again* (1939), she was in many films of the 1930s and 1940s including *The Boys From Syracuse* (1940), in which she played opposite her husband, Allen Jones. Generally a supporting actress she starred in *Frisco Lil* in 1942. As far as I can see, her last role was in *Play Misty For Me* (1971). Her son is Jack Jones, the singer. The connection with Mr. Crosby comes from Bing's film *East Side of Heaven* (1939) in which she portrayed 'Mona Barrett' the mother of the baby who plays such a big part in the picture. She also appeared with Bing on the Kraft Music Hall of April, 20, 1939.

Marion Ryan, left us in January at the age of 67. Newspaper reports described her as "the quintessential blonde bombshell with a voice to match." She worked her way up from dingy Leeds dance halls where she was spotted by band leader Ray Ellington who took her on to fame as a presenter of ITV's 'Spot The Tune' programme. A hit single 'Love Me Forever' in 1958 earned her appearances on the Royal Variety Performance and on Bing's 1961 Christmas show which was filmed in England. Marion's twin sons from her first marriage were Paul and Barry Ryan who had several hit records in the 1960s. Marion retired in 1967 and married millionaire impresario Harold Davison. She died of a heart attack in Florida.

BING CROSBY'S V-DISCS

In our last edition, Jim Reilly reviewed a 4-CD set "V Disc - A Musical Contribution by America's Best" and this new issue sparked much comment on the bulletin board of the Bing Crosby Internet Museum. In turn this brought forth a major contribution from Wayne Martin of the Club Crosby and he has kindly given us permission to reproduce it here. First of all however, to set the scene, may we quote from liner notes written some years ago by MARK SCRIMGER, president of the Club Crosby, for the Broadway Intermission LP BR-129, *Bing Crosby: The War Years:*

> "One of Bing's less publicized activities was the recording done for use by military personnel at home and abroad. These 12-inch 78 rpms were made under the auspices of the War Department's Special Services Division, and all of the great singers and orchestras of the day, including Bing, contributed their talents free of charge to this government-sponsored recording program. After the war these innocent platters were given the death sentence. Judging by the small number that still exist today, the government's efforts to demolish them were about 95 percent successful. The survivors, however, appear to have faced a fate worse than death. There seems to be no such thing as a mint or even near-mint condition one, although I'm sure they must have started out that way. Those remaining suffered untold abuse during the war and all succeeding years and are cracked, warped, scratched, and scarred generally to the point of inaudibility. But, because they contain so much non-commercial material, they are a valuable part of many, many record collections world-wide. Most of Bing's V-Disc recordings were taken directly from radio broadcast or rehearsal transcriptions and edited to fit on these discs. There are some notable exceptions, though, such as Bing's vocals with the Tommy Dorsey and Paul Weston orchestras and the Sing-A-Long medleys. These appear to have been made at special recording sessions and hence are original material available from no other source. Listen to them and see why Bing Crosby was the fighting men's favorite and their number one requested vocalist — as he was for virtually everyone the world over during the wartime 1940's."

More than 8 million V Discs were produced and distributed from 1943 to 1949. The extremely high rate of breakage of the shellac records was a problem to start with, but first vinylite and then a Canadian polyvinyl acetyl resin called Formvar overcame this to make the discs hard to break. V Discs were shipped to military units round the world on a monthly basis with each kit containing 20 records and 100 Duatone or Microphonic steel needles. Bing's V discs have been put on LP releases in the past but the standard of reproduction has been disappointing. The new CD set gives us many of Bing's V Discs in the best quality we have heard but as you will read later, the CD set is not exactly what it seems. However, first let's look at the most complete and detailed listing of Bing's V Discs ever put together.

CROSBY V-DISCOGRAPHY

by Wayne Martin, Club Crosby:

- Introduction

When I was about 15 years old, my cousin was discharged from the Navy and came home with a brand-new Philco phonograph (one of those with a drawer where you put the record you wanted to play) and a stack of records he had accumulated during his service years. Among these records was a small stack of V-Discs, including one or two with Bing Crosby. I was not allowed to touch the V-Discs, as he considered them to be "keepsakes" from the War. He said he had "liberated" them, and that he would get in trouble if anybody knew he had them. Apparently a lot of G.I.s had the same idea. Because of the original agreements with the musicians' union, the V-Discs were condemned to destruction once the project was over, but some of the unsecured ones were "lifted" by the servicemen and slipped into their duffel bags. These stolen or otherwise suspiciously-obtained discs now sit on the shelves of collectors around the world. More than eight million of these records were pressed. Only a very small percentage of these pressings still exists.

During the summer of 1998, Collectors Choice Music announced reissues of these discs by several musicians of the war era. The way had been cleared for this in 1995, when the restrictions on the discs were lifted. Among the artists chosen for reissue was Bing Crosby, and his fans were eager to hear these long-sought-after recordings. The resulting 4-CD set is a disappointment in several ways. Most of the tracks sound about as good as could be expected, considering the battered condition in which most of these old records are commonly found. However, at least as far as Bing is concerned, the collection is not complete. His versions of "Easter Parade" with Al Jolson and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" with Dinah Shore are among the missing items. Worse, there is absolutely no discographical information supplied with the set. It seems that at the very least the original Army/Navy record numbers could have been supplied, but apparently even this simple information was considered to be too much trouble. The set originally sold for nearly fifty dollars (price since reduced), and we could have expected more in the way of liner notes than was provided. Besides that, the set is rather cheaply put together. On the other hand, at least we have most of Bing's V-Discs in a usable form, and we have tried to provide the discographical information here. It was not possible to examine many of the original discs, so we turned to two sources: *The Road to Bing Crosby: V-Disc Discography* and Richard S. Sears' book, *V-Discs: A History and Discography.* The former is silent as to its authorship, but is a supplement to The Road to Bing Crosby, a 4-volume work by Ralph Harding, Fred Reynolds, Bob Roberts and Derek Parkes. The latter was published in 1980 by Greenwood Press. Not all questions have been resolved, and readers are invited to send in corrections or additions. Now, at least, you can find out the source of most of these V-disc selections.

CROSBY V-DISCOGRAPHY by Wayne Martin

The order of entry is: Title of song, composer/lyricist, Crosby film in which the song appeared, other performers, date and source of recording, matrix number, V-Disc number (Navy and Army), and LP and CD numbers.
Abbreviations: "Bwy." = Broadway Intermission (LP);
"C.C.M." = Collectors Choice Music (CD);
"J.S.T." = John Scott Trotter Orchestra.

ADESTE FIDELES (Wade-Oakley). (In Latin) J.S.T. (From 12-21-44 Kraft Music Hall).VP-1221-D5TC170. V-Disc 221-A (Navy), 441-A (Army).
Skitch Henderson, piano, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Ken Carpenter. Audience joins in on second verse. (In Latin and English). (From 12-25-46 Philco Radio Time). JB336-D6TC6656. V-Disc 796-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND (Berlin). Al Jolson, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Al. (From 5-7-47 Philco Radio Time, transcribed 3-31-47). J452-D7TC7495. V-Disc 814-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129.

ALL BY MYSELF (Berlin) (Film: Blue Skies). Al Jolson, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Al. (From 5-7-47 Philco Radio Time, transcribed 3-31-47). J452-D7TC7495. V-Disc 814-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ALLA EN EL RANCHO GRANDE (Uranga-Ramos-Del Moral-Costello). Community sing with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing. (From Army Signal Corps film soundtrack). VP1256-B42372. V-Disc unissued, but issued on a Sing-Along record, mx as shown.

ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS DANCE (Johnston-Burke). J.S.T. (From 3-15-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1306-D5TC270. V-Disc 484-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ALWAYS (Berlin) (Parody). Dick Haymes, Andy Russell, Dennis Day, Phil Harris O. (With fluff). (From 3-16-47 Jack Benny Lucky Strike Radio Show). JB447-D7TC7494. V-Disc 773-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

AMOR (Ruiz-Skylar). J.S.T. (From 5-18-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP680-D4TC-184. V-Disc 21-A(Navy); 241-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

AND SO DO I. See: SO DO I.

ARTHUR MURRAY TAUGHT ME DANCING IN A HURRY (Schertzinger-Mercer). J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Ken Carpenter. (From 5-17-45 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB201-D6TC6045. V-Disc 729-A (Army). CD: C.C.M (unnumbered).

BACK TO DONEGAL. See: DEAR OLD DONEGAL.

BING CROSBY FLUFF. See: ALWAYS.

BLESS 'EM ALL (Hughes-Lake-Stillman). Chorus, J.S.T. (From 5-25-41 Kraft Music Hall). VP706-D4TC201. V-Disc not issued, but a test pressing is known to exist.

BLUE HAWAII (Rainger-Robin) (Film: Waikiki Wedding). Chorus, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 12-7-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1070-D4TC552. V-Disc 525-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON (Edwards-Madden). Charioteers, James Sherman, piano (From 4-15-43 Kraft Music Hall) VP488-D4TC-53. V-Disc 109-A (Navy); 166-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

BY THE WATERS OF THE MINNETONKA (Caveness-Lieurance). Community sing, with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing. (From Army Signal Corps film soundtrack.) VP1255-B42371. V-Disc unissued, but issued on Sing-along record, mx as shown. CD: None.

CHRISTMAS SONG, THE (Tormé-Wells). Skitch Henderson, piano, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Ken Carpenter. (From 12-25-46 Philco Radio Time). JB337-D6TC6657. V-Disc 796-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

CLEMENTINE (Montrose). Music Maids & Hal Hopper, J.S.T. (From 6-14-41 Decca master DLA-2437). VP964-XP33785. V-Disc 337-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

COUNTRY STYLE (Van Heusen-Burke) (Film: Welcome Stranger). Chorus, J.S.T. (from 5-7-47 Philco Radio Time, transcribed 3-31-47). JB453-D7TC7496. V-Disc 780-A (Army).

CROSBY FLUFF. See: ALWAYS.

DARLING, JE VOUS AIME BEAUCOUP (Sosenko). J.S.T. (From 4-1-43 Kraft Music Hall). VP488-D4TC-53. V-Disc 109-A (Navy); 166-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

DEAR OLD DONEGAL (Graham). Chorus, J.S.T. (From 3-14-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB80-D6TC-5215. V-Disc 661-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

DEAR OLD GIRL (Morse-Buck). Charioteers, James Sherman, piano. Introd. by Bob Burns and Bing. (Source unknown). JDB51-XP35870. V-Disc 632-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"DIXIE" MEDLEY. See: SHE'S FROM MISSOURI; SUNDAY, MONDAY, OR ALWAYS; SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT. THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER, also in this medley, is by Rise Stevens, with intro. by Bing.

DOWN BY THE RIVER (Rodgers-Hart) (Film: Mississippi). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 1-18-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1201-D5TC144. V-Disc 557-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

DOWN THE OLD OX ROAD (Johnston-Coslow) (Film: College Humor). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 1-11-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1130-D5TC64. V-Disc 194-A (Navy); 414-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

EASTER PARADE (Berlin) (Film: Holiday Inn). Al Jolson, J.S.T. (From 5-7-47 Philco Radio Time, transcribed 3-31-47). J452-D7TC7495. V-Disc 814-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129.

EMPTY SADDLES (Hill-Brennan) (Film: Rhythm on the Range). Ken Lane Singers, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). JDB186-D6TC6030. V-Disc 712-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"FLEET'S IN" MEDLEY. See: TANGERINE; ARTHUR MURRAY TAUGHT ME DANCING IN A HURRY; I REMEMBER YOU.

FOR ME AND MY GAL (Meyer-Leslie-Goetz). Community Sing, with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing. (From Army Signal Corps film soundtrack). VP1236-D5TC189. V-Disc 203-B (Navy); 423-B (Army). Also issued on a Sing-Along record, mx VP1257-B42373. LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

FRIEND OF YOURS, A (Van Heusen-Burke), J.S.T. (Source unknown). FVP1333-D5TC296. V-Disc 243-A (Navy); 463-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

GOING MY WAY (Van Heusen-Burke) (Film: Going My Way). J.S.T. (From 6-29-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP856-D4TC287. V-Disc 81-A (Navy); 301-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"HERE IS MY HEART" MEDLEY. Introd. by Bing. See: WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE; LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER; JUNE IN JANUARY.

HOT TIME IN THE TOWN OF BERLIN. See: (THERE'LL BE A) HOT TIME IN THE TOWN OF BERLIN.

I CAN'T ESCAPE FROM YOU (Whiting-Robin) (Film: Rhythm on the Range). J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). JDB235-D6TC6009. V-Disc 712-A(Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

I PROMISE YOU (Arlen-Mercer) (Film: Here Come the Waves). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 11-30-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1049-D4TC535. V-Disc 143-A (Navy); 363-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

I REMEMBER YOU (Schertzinger-Mercer). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing and Ken Carpenter. (From 5-17-45 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JB201-D6TC6045. V-Disc 729-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS (Kent-Ram-Gannon). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 12-7-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1253-D5TC206. V-Disc 221-B (Navy); 441-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

I'LL GET BY, AS LONG AS I HAVE YOU (Ahlert-Turk). Paul Weston O. (Source unknown). VP1677-D5TC1505. V-Disc 598-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129.

I'M AN OLD COWHAND (Mercer) (Film: Rhythm on the Range). J.S.T. Intro. by Bob Hope and Bing. (From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). JDB235-D6TC6099. V-Disc 712-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

IN A LITTLE HULA HEAVEN (Rainger-Robin) (Film: Waikiki Wedding). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 12-7-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1070-D4TC-552. V-Disc: 525-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME (Evans-Shields). Community Sing, with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing (From Army Signal Corps film soundtracks). VP1235-D5TC188. V-Disc 203-A (Navy); 423-A (Army).(Also issued on Sing-Along record). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

IN THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN (Meyer-Clarke) (Film: The Bells of St. Mary's). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 2-14-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB76-D6TC5170. V-Disc 646-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO (G. and I. Gershwin). Dinah Shore, Gordon Jenkins O. (said to be from Aug. 1943 Dinah Shore Program). D3MC-145. V-Disc 2-A (Army).

IT CAN'T BE WRONG (Gannon-Steiner). J.S.T. (From 6-24-43 Kraft Music Hall). VP117-ND3MC-3347. V-Disc 28-B (Army).

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU (Van Heusen-Burke). J.S.T. (From 5-18-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP680-D4TC184. V-Disc 21-A (Navy); 241-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY (Judge-Williams). Dinah Shore, Gordon Jenkins O. (said to be from August 1943 Dinah Shore Program but more likely to be 2-24-43 Command Performance No. 54). D3MC-151. V-Disc 24-B (Army).

IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER (Rodgers-Hart) (Film: Mississippi). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 1-18-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1201-D5TC144. V-Disc 557-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

I'VE GOT MY CAPTAIN WORKING FOR ME NOW (Berlin) (Film: Blue Skies). MGM O. (From film soundtrack). JB467-D7TC7554. V-Disc 820-A (Army).

JINGLE BELLS (Pierpont). Ken Lane Singers, J.S.T. (From 12-21-44 Kraft Music Hall).VP1221-D5TC170. V-Disc 221-A (Navy); 441-A (Army).
Charioteers, Henderson Choir, Skitch Henderson, piano,

J.S.T. (From 12-25-46 Philco Radio Time). JB337-D6TC6657. V-Disc 796-B (Army) CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

JUNE IN JANUARY (Rainger-Robin) (Film: Here Is My Heart). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 11/30/44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1051-D4TC537. V-Disc 143-B (Navy); 363-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

KENTUCKY BABE (Buck-Geibel). Charioteers, James Sherman, piano, J.S.T. (From 8-26-43 Kraft Music Hall). VP390-D3MC463. V-Disc 128-B (Army).

LAST ROSE OF SUMMER, THE (Irish air-Moore) (Film: Dixie). Sung by Rise Stevens; intro. by Bing. (From 11-23-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1052-D4TC538. V-Disc 581-A (Army) CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

LAST ROUNDUP, THE (Hill). Lennie Hayton O. (From 9-27-33 Brunswick master LA-20). VP-1018-D4TC498. V-Disc 121-A (Navy); 341-A (Army).

LET IT SNOW! LET IT SNOW! LET IT SNOW! (Styne-Cahn). J.S.T. (From 2-14-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB76-D6TC5170. V-Disc 646-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART (Friedman-Whitson). Community Sing, with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing. (From Army Signal Corps film soundtrack). VP1236-D5TC189. V-Disc 203-B (Navy); 423-B (Army). Also issued on Sing-Along record, mx VP1257-B42372. LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).
—— J.S.T. (From 7-13-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP856-D4TC287. V-Disc 81-A (Navy); 301-A (Army).

LET'S TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME (Arlen-Mercer). (Film: Here Come the Waves) J.S.T. (From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). NVP1110-D5TC (Navy); VP1112-XP34102 (Army). V-Disc 165-A (Navy); 385-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

LOUISE (Whiting-Robin). J.S.T. (From 5-25-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP706-D4TC201. V-Disc not issued, but a test pressing is known to exist.

LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER (Gensler-Robin). (Film: Here Is My Heart) Charioteers, J.S.T. (From 11-30-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1051-D4TC-537. V-Disc 143-B (Navy); 363-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

MOONLIGHT BAY (Wenrich-Madden). Charioteers, James Sherman, piano. (From 8-5-43 Kraft Music Hall). VP452-D4TC23. V-Disc 149-A (Army).

MR. PAGANINI. (Coslow) (Film: Rhythm on the Range). Charioteers, J.S.T.(From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). JDB186-D6TC6030. V-Disc 712-B (Army). C.D.: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

MY HEART AND I (Hollander-Robin) (Film: Anything Goes, 1936). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 3-8-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1306-D5TC270. V-Disc 484-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ONE ALONE (Harbach-Hammerstein II-Romberg). Trudy Erwin, Orch. (From 11-22-43 AFRS rec. session). VP1402-D5TC518. V-Disc 263-A (Navy); 503-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ONE I LOVE BELONGS TO SOMEBODY ELSE, THE (Jones-Kahn). Al Jolson, J.S.T. (From 1-15-47 Philco Radio Time). JB345-D7TC7128. V-Disc 763-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ONE MORE DREAM (Medoff-Kaye). Charioteers, J.S.T. (From 3-21-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB90-B45463. V-Disc 673-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ONE, TWO, BUTTON YOUR SHOE (Johnston-Burke) (Film: Pennies from Heaven). Ken Lane Singers, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 11-16-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1035-D4TC-519. V-Disc 598-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ONLY FOREVER (Monaco-Burke) (Film: Rhythm on the River). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 1-18-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1201-D5TC144. V-Disc 557-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129.

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN (Johnston-Burke) (Film: Pennies from Heaven). Tommy Dorsey O. (From 6-18-44 All Time Hit Parade). VP786-D4TC238. V-Disc 67-A (Navy); 287-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (Unnumbered).
—— Chorus, J.S.T. (From 11-16-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1677-D5TC1505. V-Disc 598-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"PENNIES FROM HEAVEN" MEDLEY. See: ONE, TWO, BUTTON YOUR SHOE; SO DO I; PENNIES FROM HEAVEN; SKELETON IN THE CLOSET.

PLEASE (Rainger-Robin) (Film: The Big Broadcast of 1932). J.S.T. (From 7-29-43 Kraft Music Hall rehearsal). VP389-D3MC462. V-Disc 128-A (Army).

POINCIANA (SONG OF THE TREE) (Simon-Bernier). Orch. (From 11-22-43 AFRS rec. session). VP1402-D5TC518. V-Disc 263-A (Navy); 503-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"RHYTHM ON THE RANGE" MEDLEY. See: I'M AN OLD COWHAND; I CAN'T ESCAPE FROM YOU; EMPTY SADDLES; MR. PAGANINI.

RIDIN' HERD ON A CLOUD (Botkin-Schwartz-Bushallow). J.S.T. (From 8-12-43 Kraft Music Hall rehearsal). VP452-D4TC23. V-Disc 149-A (Army).

SHE'S FROM MISSOURI (Van Heusen-Burke). (Film: Dixie). Charioteers, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 11-23-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1053-D4TC-539. V-Disc 581-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

ARMY—NAVY—MARINE CORPS—COAST GUARD
No. 581B
MEDLEY FROM "DIXIE"
(Part Two)
1. She's From Missouri
2. Swing Low Sweet Chariot
Bing Crosby
With the Charioteers and John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra
Vocal "CC" RELEASE
Produced by the Music Branch, Special Services Division, Army Service Forces
OUTSIDE START 78 R.P.M.

SHOO FLY PIE AND APPLE PAN DOWDY (Woods-Gallop). Charioteers, Eddie Duchin, piano, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 3-14-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal) JDB80-D6TC5215. V-Disc 661-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SILENT NIGHT (Gruber-Mohr). Kraft Choral Club, J.S.T. (From 12-21-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1221-D5TC170. V-Disc 221-A (Navy); 441-A, (Army). CD: C.C.M. (Unnumbered)
—— Mixed Chorus and orchestra. (Source unknown). VP140-ND3MC3369. V-Disc 48-A (Army).
—— Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 12-25-46 Philco Radio Time). JB338-DGTC6658. V-Disc 797-A (Army).
—— CD: (version unknown) C.C.M. (unnumbered)

SIOUX CITY SUE (Thomas-Freedman). Charioteers, J.S.T. (Source unknown). JDB119-D6TC5298. V-Disc 685-A (Army) CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SKELETON IN THE CLOSET (Johnston-Burke) (Film: Pennies from Heaven). Charioteers, James Sherman, piano, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing, who does not sing. (From 11-16-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1036-D4TC520. V-Disc 598-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SLEEP KENTUCKY BABE. See: KENTUCKY BABE.

SMALL FRY (Carmichael-Loesser) (Film: Sing You Sinners). Tommy Dorsey O. Intro. by Bing. (From 6-18-44 All Time Hit Parade). VP773-D4TC231. V-Disc 49-A (Navy); 269-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered)
.—— Johnny Mercer, Paul Weston O. (From 7-27-44 Johnny Mercer's Music Shop). VP1675-D5TC1503. V-Disc unissued.

SMALL HOTEL. See THERE'S A SMALL HOTEL.

SO DO I (Johnston-Burke) (Film: Pennies from Heaven). Eugenie Baird, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 11-16-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1035-D4TC519. V-Disc 598-A. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SOMEONE STOLE GABRIEL'S HORN (Hayes-Mills-Washington). Dorsey Bros. O. (From 3-14-33 Brunswick master B-13149-A). V-Disc mx. no. unknown. V-Disc unissued.

SOON (Rodgers-Hart) (Film: Mississippi). J.S.T. (From 1-18-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1130-D5TC64. V-Disc 194-A (Navy); 414-A (Army).

STRANGE MUSIC (Grieg-Wright-Forrest). J.S.T. (From 12-28-44 Kraft Music Hall). NVP1110-D5TC-35 (Navy); VP1112-XP34102 (Army). V-Disc 165-A (Navy); 385-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SUMMERTIME (Gershwin-Heyward). Dinah Shore, Gordon Jenkins O. (said to be from August 1943 Dinah Shore Program). VP90-D3MC 150. V-Disc unissued.

SUNDAY, MONDAY, OR ALWAYS (Van Heusen-Burke) (Film: Dixie). J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 11-23-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1052-D4TC538. V-Disc 581-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SWEET LEILANI (Owens) (Film: Waikiki Wedding). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 12-7-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1070-D4TC552. V-Disc 525-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT (Sheppard) (Film: Dixie). Charioteers, Henderson Choir. Intro. by Bing (From 11-23-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1053-D4TC539. V-Disc 581-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

SWINGING ON A STAR (Van Heusen-Burke) (Film: Going My Way). Charioteers, J.S.T. (Source unknown). VP857-D4TC288. V-Disc 81-B Navy); 301-B (Army). CD: C.C.M.(unnumbered).
—— A version with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ was issued on a Sing-Along record, matrix VP1256-B42372.

TANGERINE (Schertzinger-Loesser). J.S.T. Intro. by Bing Crosby and Ken Carpenter (From 5-17-45 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB201-D6TC6045. V-Disc 729-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

THAT SLY OLD GENTLEMAN (Monaco-Burke) (Film: East Side of Heaven). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 4-26-45 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). VP1333-D5TC296. V-Disc 243-A (Navy); 463-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

THAT'S AN IRISH LULLABY. See: TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL.

(THERE'LL BE A) HOT TIME IN THE TOWN OF BERLIN (Bushkin-DeVries). Andrews Sisters, Vic Schoen O. (From 6-30-44 Decca master L-3449). VP964-XP33785. V-Disc 337-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

THERE'S A SMALL HOTEL (Rodgers-Hart). Eddie Duchin, piano, J.S.T. Intro. by Bob Hope. (From 2-28-46 Kraft Music Hall Rehearsal). JDB164-D6TC5998. V-Disc 700-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

THESE FOOLISH THINGS (REMIND ME OF YOU) (Strachey - Marvell). Charioteers, Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 2-7-46 Kraft Music Hall). JDB51-XP35870. V-Disc 632-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).
Frank Sinatra, J.S.T. (from 11-16-44 Kraft Music Hall.) Matrix number unknown. V-Disc unissued.

TOAST TO IRVING BERLIN, A. See: ALL BY MYSELF; ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND; EASTER PARADE.

TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL (Shannon) (Film: Going My Way). Chorus, J.S.T. (From 6-22-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP857-D4TC288. V-Disc 81-B (Navy); 301-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).
A version with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ was issued on a Sing-Along record, matrix VP-1255-B42371.

TOO ROMANTIC (Monaco-Burke) (Film: Road to Singapore). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 3-22-45 Kraft Music Hall). VP1306-D5TC270. V-Disc 484-A (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

"WAIKIKI WEDDING" MEDLEY. See: BLUE HAWAII; IN A LITTLE HULA HEAVEN; SWEET LEILANI.

WAIT 'TIL THE SUN SHINES, NELLIE (Von Tilzer-Sterling) (Film: Birth of the Blues). Community Sing, with male chorus, piano and Hammond organ, led by Bing. (From Army Signal Corps film soundtracks). VP-1235-D5TC188. V-Disc 203-A (Navy); 423-A (Army). (Also issued on Sing-Along record, mx VP1254-B42370). LP: Bwy. BR-129.
Mary Martin, Jack Teagarden O. (From 1941 film promotional records). VP1551-XP-35172. V-Disc 542-B (Army). CD: C.C.M.(unnumbered)

WAITER AND THE PORTER AND THE UPSTAIRS MAID, THE (Mercer). (Film: Birth of the Blues) Mary Martin & Jack Teagarden with Jack Teagarden O. (From 1941 film promotional records). VP-1551-XP35172. V-Disc 542-B (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE INFANTRY? (Loesser). Chorus, J.S.T. (From 8-5-43 Kraft Music Hall rehearsal). VP390-D3MC463. V-Disc 128-B (Army).

WHITE CHRISTMAS (Berlin) (Films: Holiday Inn and White Christmas). Henderson Choir, J.S.T. (From 12-14-44 Kraft Music Hall. VP1253-D5TC206. V-Disc 221-B (Navy); 441-B, (Army). CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).
—— J.S.T. (From 12-25-46 Philco Radio Time). JB338-D6TC6658. V-Disc 797-A (Army).

WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE (Rainger-Robin) (Film: Here Is My Heart). J.S.T. (From 11-30-44 Kraft Music Hall). VP1051-D4TC537. V-Disc 143-B (Navy); 363-B (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

YANK IN A TANK, A . Choir, J.S.T. Intro. by Bing. (From 10-14-43 Kraft Music Hall). VP389-D3MC462. V-Disc 128-A (Army).

YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE (Davis-Mitchell). J.S.T. (From 2-24-43 Command Performance No. 54) D3MC146. V-Disc 24-A (Army).

YOU CALL EVERYBODY DARLIN' (Martin-Trace-Watts). Jud Conlon's Rhythmaires, J.S.T. (From 11/3/48 Philco Radio Time). J666-1096. V-Disc 893-A (Army). LP: Bwy. BR-129. CD: C.C.M. (unnumbered).

(Editor: A much needed update to the V-Disc listings we have held previously. Well done, Wayne for a great job. The 4-CD set mentioned contains some superb Bing tracks and I am delighted to possess it. However, it may not be everything it purports to be. Lionel Pairpoint has been on the case....)

LIONEL'S LINES

IDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

The word is out once more that there are those who have been suggesting that I have become besotted with nostalgia. I am only too aware that younger people read these columns but as the main subject of my writings has now been deceased for almost 22 years and began his rise to eminence more than 50 years before that, I feel there is no case to answer in this respect. In addition, one of our European neighbours is claiming that, as a nation, we are still obsessed with the War. I think they've overlooked World Cup 1966, the Eurovision Song Contest 1967 and "It's A Knockout" 1975.

Well, both factions are in for a rough ride because, I can

remember when the forerunner of the National Lottery was, one sausage, per ration book, per week. I can remember butterfly bombs, barrage balloons, beetroot pudding and that if you heard the explosion you were probably still alive.

I can remember a dank day in February when I hugged Mum to my adolescent chest and left home for the first time. I remember alighting from a train, in a strange place, to a bleak landscape and a freezing wind that scoffed at my threadbare raincoat. I can remember my first posting to a recently vacated USAAF Base which was a few miles closer to the Arctic Circle than the last place and luxuriating in the benefits of central heating and hot showers for the first time. I can remember affecting cool indifference when informed that, "not so long ago" , the Glenn Miller Band had performed in Hangar No. 3 and it would be years later, I learned that, around the same time, Bing Crosby had trod the corridors of the abandoned hospital which was my place of work..

I can remember my first date with a girl in uniform, cookhouse tea, fire picquet and the E.T. Room (nothing to do with aliens). I can remember, Sgt. Frank "Honeypot" Honey (a good dictionary of slang will instruct you why both officers and enlisted men regarded this sobriquet as most becoming). He was a small, fast talking, rapidly balding , "time-server" with an untrained moustache. A better idea of his appearance will be obtained if I tell you of the time, the camp cinema showed a double bill of Laurel & Hardy and when James Finlayson, the catalyst for so many of their movies, came into view, three hundred throats breathed, "Honeypot!"

He was one of those men whose sense of humour rejoiced in irritating others with misnomers. Anyone who was five feet four would be "Lofty", someone with jet black hair was "Ginger", another, from Glasgow, would be christened, "Paddy" . I was "Fairbanks". Unsure as to whether this was to emphasise an uncanny dissimilarity to a great actor or, merely a corruption of my surname, I did some undercover work, only to discover my predecessor, another corporal named "Fairbanks" had been court-martialed for selling high octane aviation fuel to local farmers. To this day, I have not figured out whether I was being complimented or insulted.

Sgt. Honey was also in charge of "Entertainments" and being foolish enough to admit to having parts in a couple of school plays, I was roped in for one of his occasional, ragbag extravaganzas of songs and smutty sketches. I had the "name" role in a shadowgraph entitled, "The Surgeon's Dilemma". This involved (in silhouette), removing increasingly, bizarre objects from "the patient's" innards until reaching "the real cause of the problem" - a cardboard swastika. There were several of these vignettes in the same hilarious vein but the whole of the second half was always devoted to what our bashful sergeant marked on the call sheets, "Frank Sings". His singing voice was, to say the least, unusual. Quite musical but pitched at a high tenor, bordering on castrato and although he was definitely a man's man, his repertoire which included "Jim" and "Yes, My Darling Daughter", leant toward songs more suited to girl singers. So, no one was certain if it was for real or if he was a singularly gifted female impersonator. Whatever, his recitals were greeted with rapturous applause but possibly for the wrong reasons.

This brings me to the not entirely unrelated matter of Bing Crosby because I can also remember that we inherited from the departing Americans, not only the central heating but a donut machine and a cache of V-Discs which some Philistines found ideal for skimming the length of a barrack room like prototype Frisbees and if they should scrape the occasional bedspring on the way or have a close encounter with the door knob, it only went to show that they really were (almost) unbreakable. Like many great heroes, I am usually reluctant to call upon my wartime experiences but our Editor, (whose name eludes me at the moment), continues in his attempts to guide my pen into copybooks it has no wish to blot. I hate to keep mentioning this but he has been showing some petulance of late and as it appears that I am being shuffled further and further back in the magazine, presumably in the hope that I will eventually, fall off the back page, I have decided that on this occasion, I will bow to his blandishments. So, if you are bored to tears by what ensues, you will know whom to blame!

There will be those among you who will have acquired the four CD Set of V-Disc recordings, "V Disc - A Musical Contribution By America's Best". The immediate reaction to this issue was, "Wonderful! - A great part of this unique material in better condition than we ever dared hope" Especially, as history has advised us that the US Government had ordered the destruction of all V-Discs (and the masters) in order that the artistes' free contribution to the war effort should never be exploited.

As we know, many of the original discs survived the massacre, albeit bearing a few battle scars but now we are told that Lieutenant E.P. "Digi" DiGiannantonio has been sitting on "the original V-Discs, awaiting the appropriate time to share these historic recordings with the public" Surely, a more "appropriate time" would have been thirty or forty years ago, when there would have been more people alive whose hearts (and pockets) might have been touched by these echoes from their past.

The V-Disc Programme enjoyed a facility to rifle any locker for their raw materials and in the case of Bing Crosby, the Decca vaults were raided for, "The Last Round-Up", "Clementine" and "There'll Be A Hot Time In The Town Of Berlin". Paramount coughed up with soundtrack extracts and Bing recorded some special material but by far, the greatest repository for these appropriations was the rich territory of radio broadcasts. Increasingly, favourite radio shows were being transcribed for short-waving to the fighting men in distant combat zones and as far as Bing was concerned, the majority of his V-Disc masters, originated from Kraft Music Hall programmes or their rehearsals. It is highly likely that these "rehearsal" sessions would have been more formal than was usual and there is every reason to suppose that they may have included titles which were not represented in the subsequent live broadcast.

A criticism of the new CD set has been its lack of discographical information but in truth, there is a conspicuous shortage of any information. A leaflet inside the case, contains a brief note on "The V-Disc Program" and a sketchy, fifteen line biography of Bing Crosby. No doubt he would have been startled to learn that he "was born Harry Lili Crosby"! The track listing, continues to showcase the lost art of proof-reading - "Pennies Form Heaven", "It Cold Happen To You" - the inevitability of

"Adeste Fidelis" and "Amore" (You will find that the "hidden" rhymes, "adore" and "before", don't quite work if the title is sung with the Italian pronunciation) and there are no prizes for spotting several others.

Although these minor errors may irritate the more pedantic, further distractions meet the eye. Titles which occupied the same side of a V-Disc have been unaccountably separated and we can only guess that there may have been a perfectly explicable reason for this. Discs Nos.1 & 2 play for a surprising twenty seven minutes longer than the combined times of Disc Nos. 3 and 4, inviting the theory, that a three disc set has been stretched to four. Experts on the subject might also detect, mysterious differences in timing between some of the selections featured on the CD and the original recordings. It might be informative to investigate some of these apparent anomalies, beginning with Disc 1, Track 2.

It has been suggested in the past that "Please", issued on V-Disc 128-A, was from the Kraft broadcast of 29th July 1943. Not so! During the orchestral break and before he takes up the theme again with, "Your eyes reveal that you have the soul of..." Bing can be heard joining in with the orchestra. On the V-Disc this extempore accompaniment is entirely whistled but on the actual broadcast, only one line is whistled and the remainder is "La de de dah de dummed" etc., The version heard on the CD is neither the V-Disc nor the broadcast but the Crosby voice of some eleven years earlier and is, quite blatantly, the familiar commercial master from September 1932.

Bing and the Charioteers at work.

The oddities queue up on Disc No.4. There can be no quibbles with Track 1 - the medley from "Waikiki Wedding" is the exact twin of V-Disc 525-B (so was the broadcast of 7th December 1944) or Track 3 ("Clementine") and Track 14 ("Hot Time In The Town Of Berlin") which, as previously mentioned, were the commercial issues and as such might be difficult to distinguish from a mint V-Disc. However, the remaining eleven tracks do not stand up to close scrutiny.

For instance, V-Disc 149-A 'Moonlight Bay' emanated from a Kraft programme (or its rehearsal). The version heard on the CD is none other than a (poor) copy of the version with the Charioteers, aired on the first Philco Radio Time broadcast of 16th October 1946. The earliest of several differences can be found in the line:

V-Disc 149-A "We could hear the voices ringin'..."
CD "You could hear the voices ringin'..."

The same V-Disc included a version of, "Ridin' Herd On A Cloud" which is out on its own, as it differs from any of the three versions heard on Kraft. But the CD, takes its source from the broadcast of 2nd September 1943 and differs thus:

V-Disc 149-A "....on the look out fer some rustlers..."
CD "....on the look out for some rustlers..."

The most flagrant "give away" on the CD is applause at the close of the song which appears on previous LP and CD issues but is rarely (?) heard on V-Discs!

It is suggested that "What Do You Do In The Infantry?" originated from the Kraft Music Hall programme broadcast on 5th August 1943 but it is more likely to be from a rehearsal as the version heard on V-Disc 128-B differs from the broadcast:

V-Disc 128-B "The son of a gun in the signal corps is travellin' on a bike,
But what d'yez do in the infantry....."
Broadcast "The son of a gun in the signal corps is travellin' on a bike,
'N' what do you do in the infantry...."

Conclusion: The CD track has been taken from the broadcast version (available on several previous issues) rather than the actual V-Disc.

"Please" which has already been mentioned was paired on the same V-Disc with "A Yank In A Tank", aired on Kraft Music Hall on two separate occasions and the CD proudly announces this title but has fallen into the elementary trap of confusing the song with Hoagy Carmichael's, entirely different, "A Cranky Old Yank In A Clanky Old Tank" which was also used twice on Kraft but never issued on V-Disc. It would seem, conceivable, that this may have been "lifted" from the Sandy Hook issue, "The Music & Sound Of World War II"

V-Disc 24-A is puzzling. "You Are My Sunshine" was originally suggested as having been mastered from the Kraft broadcast of 1st April 1943 but differs as follows:

V-Disc 24-A "....I dreamed I held you in my arms..."
Broadcast "....I dreamt I held you in my arms..."

Still feasible, of course, as coming from a rehearsal for that show. It is significant that this was the last time that the song was sung on Kraft, not having been used since 30th October 1941 but listening to Command Performance No.54 of 24th February 1943, recorded five weeks prior to the Kraft broadcast, reveals that this version is identical to the one issued on the V-Disc. It is worth noting that Bing's other vocal contributions to

Command Performance No.54 were duets with Dinah Shore of, "It Ain't Necessarily So" (issued on V-Disc 2-A) and "It's A Long Way To Tipperary" (which was coupled with "You Are My Sunshine" on the above-mentioned V-Disc), and although "Tipperary" sounds awfully like the effort from the Command Performance, the Gershwin song is entirely different. Neither of these numbers are represented on the CD and it is claimed that they were taken from a Dinah Shore Show of August 1943 which seems to be less than probable, given the dates already offered. The CD entry (Track 13) for "You Are My Snshine" can be dismissed, out of hand, as it does not feature the Music Maids and is, patently, the Decca master LA2515-A of 8th July 1941.

No slur is intended when I say that I would challenge Bing Crosby to sing certain songs, in exactly the same way, on separate occasions. The type of song to which I refer will be slightly up-beat and will have a proliferation of lyrics - something like "Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive" or "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" and Bing will, invariably, be guilty of some little diversion (often intended, sometimes unwittingly) from the song sheet. (Seven radio performances of "Swinging On A Star" have been checked against the V-Disc issue - all display variances). Another number in this category is, "Country Style" and as far as I am aware, there are only three instances of the song being sung by Bing. The soundtrack from "Welcome Stranger" can be easily distinguished from the commercial issue and the rendition heard on Philco Radio Time of 7th May 1947 (which provided the master for V-Disc 780-A) differs, wildly, from either. The "hands that hold you" have become "arms that hold you" and "hear that banjo" is now "hear that geetar" and once more, the CD deceives us with the Decca master, rather than the original V-Disc.

From the same Philco stable, come Tracks 11 & 12, purporting to originate from V-Disc 814-A, a medley with Al Jolson comprising, "All By Myself", "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and "Easter Parade". Again, the date is suggested as being 7th May 1947 but the actual transcription took place on 31st March and there is no doubt that the V-Disc found its origins here, along with the broadcast version. "All By Myself" sounds pretty much the same from either source but salient differences proliferate in, "Alexander's Ragtime Band". The earliest occurs in the second line of Bing's introductory patter:

V-Disc 814-A	"...I really think you ought to start this next tune..."
CD	"...I think it's proper that you should start this song..."

Strangely enough, the ninety second version of "Easter Parade" seems to have been lost in the shuffle and is unable to find space on a compact disc that is timed at a niggardly 39 minutes.

"I'll Get By" (V-Disc 598B) used to be said to have been taken from the Kraft broadcast of 16th November 1944. In fact, the only time the song was aired during the whole series was on the 6th July 1944. I shall not burden you with the conspicuous dissimilarities between the musical arrangements of the broadcast as opposed to the V-Disc. It may be better to advise you that the version on the CD exhibits audience response at the close of the song which is more consistent with several previous issues on LP and CD than the genuine V-Disc .

The deception of "Only Forever" (V-Disc 557-A) should hit even the most naive, right between the eyes. The CD offers a running time of 3.06 minutes, whereas the V-Disc version, arranged as part medley, with assistance from the Henderson Choir, lasts just under, two minutes. Once again, an old Decca favourite substitutes for the real McCoy .

I have already referred to the fact that a couple of issues on V-Disc relied upon portions of film soundtrack for their source and the relevant excerpts from "Birth Of The Blues" are faithfully reproduced on the CD. But we do not enjoy the same service with ,"I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now", from the movie, "Blue Skies". Two glaring omissions preclude this from being V-Disc 820-A. The first is an introduction which states, "This is Bing Crosby with a song you're gonna enjoy" , the second being the presence of Billy De Wolfe whose voice is heard enough times to legitimately label it "a duet". By this time, you will have twigged that the usual substitution of the commercial master has been made.

Bing and Billy De Wolfe - "I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now".

Just twelve of the songs have been selected for unfavourable comparison and no doubt those who possess this set will have already spotted its shortcomings and could well have written this article, themselves. There may be one or two more examples to uncover but my own inadequate copies of the V-Discs and/or the broadcasts have hampered closer identification.

To those who may be considering acquiring this issue, I trust it will be sufficient to say, that there are another 69 songs on these CD's, most of which appear to be from the original V-Disc recordings, in good or reasonable condition and a large proportion of these are "alternates" of Bing's radio renditions which do not appear in any other form. I shall not seek your opinion on the disappearance of Bing's brief spoken introduction to "In

The Land Of Beginning Again" or why a cough confirms that "Soon" was taken from a broadcast or how a "spalpeen" singles out "Dear Old Donegal". The most searching question will always be, "Why did the producers find it necessary to resort to these shenanigans?

Special thanks to Stan White and Barry Simcoe, Mark Scrimger's and Wayne Martin's writings on the Internet, not forgetting those pioneers in the game, the late Bob Roberts and Ralph Harding.

Lionel Pairpoint

(Editor: Some amazing detective work from Lionel which does rather confirm that the producers of the CD deliberately expanded the issue to 4 CDs by using rogue tracks. Disappointing and unnecessary because the first three CDs make this a very desirable collection.)

Bert Bishop's BING ON THE BOX

How intriguing that *High Society* no longer stars Bing - well, not if you go by most of the television journals. A typical example being Satellite Times which in their cast credits mentions only Frank Sinatra or, at best, Sinatra and Grace Kelly. Okay, so we're still on the wave of posthumous affection for Frank clearly apparent in my local record store where there are over one hundred Sinatra compact discs on display by comparison with thirty for Bing. Indeed, one special cased collection of the 'newer fella' is on sale at £499.99 - no, that's not a misprint - and while I've no wish to suck on sour grapes there does appear to exist quite disproportionate marketing values of the two voices. In this regard I was pleased to receive from Frans van der Kolff, of The Netherlands, several computer print-outs on this very subject of Bing being marketed poorly. Several of the letters had been E-mail posted by American students, the gist of which being that Bing doesn't need to be hyped up; just re-release the classic songs from his greatest years - illustrated by, for example, the songs that were featured on the Bing's Hollywood 15-LP set and discs along the lines of 'Bing and Some Jazz Friends' - and let the people get hip to Bing. That is their words in the main, and whilst I thought that 'hip' had long been replaced by 'cool' there is, no doubt, more than a subtle difference lost on many of us. This over-simplification is not really the answer and one can only hope that the passage of time will redress the balance. One thing is certain, without a demand there'll be no supply. The two grow hand in hand. All who read this magazine are ambassadors of Bing and we must continue to support the presence of his voice and image on radio, television and in the record shops, and hope that an awareness of his stature will permeate throughout a new generation who, like any other before it, will always be looking to be entertained by what it considers to be quality entertainers. Unless it is made aware any new generation will never know what quality entertainment is!

An interesting item in the Radio Times asked 'Is it heresy to say that the musical *High Society* now seems better than the non-musical original *The Philadelphia Story?*' A moot point not about to be discussed here; but this is the first time I've ever seen this suggestion put into print in a national publication, which goes on to add that all the cast are as sublimely charming and relaxed as the Cole Porter, evergreen score. Its continued popularity is quite clearly apparent from the following list of recently noted Crosby movies. Obviously a jewel in the crown of Turner Network Television for the Company transmit this highly entertaining film more than any other musical.

DECEMBER			
GOING MY WAY	Sky Cinema		25th
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR	Sky Cinema		27th
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT	TNT		28th
HIGH SOCIETY	BBC2	4.30pm	31st
HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	11.30pm	31st
FEBRUARY			
HIGH SOCIETY	TNT		2nd
HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	(twice)	3rd
ROAD TO UTOPIA	Sky Cinema		16th

In case you tuned in to Channel 5 on December 27th expecting Bing in the Connecticut Yankee film you'd have been unlucky as this was a 1989 TVM with no connection to Cros; however, there was a Stanley Baxter revisited night and, as anticipated, a considerable clip was shown from Bing's last Christmas show, featuring them both - Baxter as Bob Hope, as I'm sure you recall. January was a bad month for Bing. Nowt!

MY FAVOURITE NIECE

There were a couple of broadcasting coups in the period leading up to Christmas that provided us with very interesting and informative entertainment from presenters in the USA and the UK Both have involved members of the fair sex who, in years past, had direct contact with Bing and from whom we have never heard before. Initially, we turn to BBC Northampton when on the night of 11th. December 1998 Martin Weston presented Peter Moreton interviewing Carolyn Michaels, who is the daughter of Bing's sister, Mary Rose. Recorded the previous day, in a telephone link up from New Mexico, Peter was clearly delighted by this opportunity to talk with the fluently unflappable Carolyn as she reminisced about her Uncle Bing. Among the first of her favourite

TNT's favourite film?

memories were childhood recollections of visiting her maternal grandparents in Los Angeles, with part of the trip being a visit to the Paramount studios that Bing would arrange. This was around the mid-1940s when he was filming *The Emperor Waltz* and subsequent movies.

"As a child then there was no Disneyland, so this was Disneyland for me with all the people in costumes and make-up and watching him working.", she related, going on to describe how hospitable and loving he was around the set. Carolyn described the stories she heard through the family of the amazing turn of events that led up to Bing's success, and how her grandmother had always had faith in him being the one destined for greatness with celebrity status; "And by golly she was right!"

The conversation turned to Bing's Irish ancestry and visits there. Carolyn went on to say that she made two trips to the Emerald Isle herself and was told that in many Irish homes there were three portraits hanging; the Pope, JFK and Bing: "So I thought he was in good company!"

"I suppose he is just about as big as anybody in the world, in a legendary sense.", suggested Peter Moreton.

"Yes, and isn't it amazing that after all these years he is still so well remembered, and his music so well remembered. I know that wherever he is it would be very meaningful to him.", she responded.

She went on to relate that her grandmother didn't like the film *The Country Girl* and was disappointed with it because she thought that people would equate this role to the real man, her son.

When Carolyn graduated from college she went to Los Angeles to try and make a career for herself:

"Mother talked to Uncle Bing about making arrangements for me. So he talked to Paramount and I was signed on as a contract player for a short time. Then he wanted to make sure that I was in a good, safe place .... so he contacted a residents' club that was for girls in the entertainment industry. In the meantime he said 'you'll come and stay with me at the house'. That was the house on Mapleton Drive. Aunt Dixie had passed away by then and my grandmother was living in Dixie's quarters, and I can recall Uncle Bing coming down to breakfast whistling or humming and I'd be thinking how many people would like to be in my shoes at this moment! He did like a full, hot breakfast .... and sitting by the side of him would be that wonderful black Labrador, Cindy, who had become too old to go with him but would always get excited when he went hunting, waiting by the door ready to go too. He loved hunting, he loved fishing and he loved his family." (It should be noted, as I'm sure most readers know, that the term hunting relates to shooting in the USA, and not riding to hounds.)

"Of course to me, he was just that wonderful person who

made magical things happen."

After he had attained a certain status, and within the framework of his workload, Carolyn explained that Bing put his family first and would not undertake schedules that interfered with his private life. If he wanted, say, to take the boys up to the ranch in Nevada and it meant saying no to a recording date or film shoot then he would do so. Touching upon the television shows, especially the Christmas shows with his family, Carolyn said that she had not attended any herself as she was not living in Los Angeles at that time and, in any event, was busy raising her six children following upon her marriage. But she could confirm that Bing was much the same in his private life as his public image portrayed. He got on well with most performers, especially when they were guests on his programmes, and the jokes and ad lib comments were very much the man at all times. What you saw was what you got. Which is very much a confirmation of what others have said in the past. Bing had certain favourite singers and liked Ella Fitzgerald, for example, because of her jazz roots, but was cautioned by his manager or adviser that performing alongside Louis Armstrong in the film *High Society* might damage his career.

"Uncle Bing said 'absolutely not. Louis Armstrong is one of the greatest jazz musicians in the world and I feel privileged to perform with him and that's who I want in the picture.' He got what he wanted pretty generally I think!"

He enjoyed playing a priest, so *Going My Way* and *The Bells Of St. Mary's* would have been among the favourites of his own films. Of Bob Hope she said that they were not close friends as some might have imagined. They worked well together but apart from meeting up on the golf course during joint working schedules their private lives rarely if ever crossed. "They had different interests. Maybe working together was enough." Of Christmas Carolyn explained that some of her earliest seasonal memories were of Bing's first wife.

"Aunt Dixie was like a child at Christmas. She loved the gift buying and wrapping and would hire people to come to the house as there were so many gifts to wrap they couldn't do it all themselves. Then in later years when Bing moved to Hillsborough with his second wife, Kathryn, we were invited, my mother and my Aunt Cath and her family, to Christmas dinner, or the day after, and we would all go into the living room after, where there was a piano and a pianist, and we would have a singalong kind of evening. It was lovely; and Uncle Bing would end up standing next to the piano and would close the evening by singing "White Christmas" - and there wasn't a dry eye in the house I can tell you!"

Peter asked about the auction of many of Bing's treasured effects following his death, and the sadness this caused in the family.

"It was unbelievable. My mother had been contacted and told this would take place, and she was appalled. I asked if she would be going to San Francisco but she said 'Certainly not!' But a few days later she called me back and said 'I've changed my mind, I want to see what's there and what's going on'. So she did attend and was told that she could pick two items for herself as memorabilia but anything over and above that she would have to bid for. It was very awkward and embarrassing, but when she got back she called me and told me that the family bible was among the belongings. She rescued that and that's what I have now."

Peter drew Carolyn's attention to the curious fact that Bing had been interviewed for BBC radio by the late, great Alan Dell on the 11th. October 1977 and recorded some songs for the BBC, two of which were "The Only Way To Go" and "There's Nothing That I Haven't Sung About". And just a couple of days before his conversation with Carolyn, Peter said that he'd been talking with some friends over dinner and mentioned about the forthcoming interview of Bing's niece. One of his dinner guests was a BA pilot and said that he had flown Bing to Africa shortly before his death and that Bing had been invited to the cockpit. "All he wanted to talk about was the flight. All I wanted to talk about was him!", explained the pilot. But in the aerial conversation it came through that Bing had conveyed that if he ever had to go he would like it to be on a golf course. "Now wasn't that prophetic?", suggested Peter.

Carolyn agreed and continued: "I remember those two songs, though I haven't heard them for some while. It's all very ironic. And I remember also that he had said that he wanted to be buried in a plain pine box. Nothing fancy.", she concluded wistfully, in retrospective regret at her Uncle's passing. By that comment the discussion had run its full course and, in closing, Peter thanked Carolyn on behalf of BBC Northampton, saying: "We wish you here, from England, the very happiest of Christmases. It's twenty-one years since we lost that great, legendary Uncle Bing of yours. His legend certainly lives on here and it's going to go on living for decades.

"Thank you so much;", concluded Carolyn, "it's been my pleasure. And I want to wish happy and peaceful holidays to everyone in the UK"

MARY-ELIZABETH ADAMS

Who? I hear you ask. Let me tell you that this was one of the screenplay names of a subsequently celebrated Hollywood child actress. And if Zuzu Bailey rings no bells either then you didn't watch either *Blue Skies* or *It's A Wonderful Life* over the Christmas period! The big clue in that last line relates to the little lady's most famous line in that last, very famous film: "Teacher says every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings." (By the way, have you ever noticed that as Jimmy Stewart runs home yelling Merry Christmas to all he passes, the camera slow pans on a cinema that is showing *The Bells Of St. Mary's* - also an RKO movie.) Well now, you will realise that we're talking about the pretty, young miss who played Bing's daughter in *Blue Skies*, Karolyn Grimes.

And the reason for this happy excursion into the cinematic past is that she was a welcome guest on Rich

Michaels' Big Band To Broadway Christmas Special where, as on previous occasions as reported here, Greg Van Beek was on hand, in this instance to interview this charming lady between a veritable cornucopia of Crosby Christmas recordings. Greg is an Associate Editor of Bingang, the magazine of the American Club Crosby, and Rich's regular programme goes out on WBKV Radio, West Bend, Wisconsin, and I am grateful to both Rich and Greg for making a recording of the programme available for a review here. But first, as a reminder, a little bit of introductory dialogue from *Blue Skies*. The scene, a nursery bedroom. Enter Johnny Adams, a grasshopping night-club owner, father and divorcee:

"Hello, Mary-Elizabeth."
"Hello. Who are you?"
"I'm an old friend of your mother."
"Good friend?"
"I hope so."

"Now I know who you are. Mummy showed me your picture. You're my old Daddy, aren't you? I'm pleased to meet you."

Well, Karolyn was just five years old when she experienced that particular six minutes of cinematic fame during which Bing's character carries his screen daughter over to the piano and croons a classic Irving Berlin song of sound advice that fits the film plot's message - "Running Around In Circles Getting Nowhere". The wistful expression on Johnny Adams' face, as he concludes the makeshift lullaby says it all. "You sing very well.", compliments Mary-Elizabeth." Clearly a discerning daughter!

Mary-Elizabeth with her 'old' daddy.

In welcoming Karolyn to the airwaves Greg said how lucky she was to have had that experience. (Her responses here having been condensed and paraphrased.)

"I was lucky in a lot of ways. Those big ol' blue eyes looked right at me and he cracked jokes and played with me. He was a lot of fun."

"Why don't you tell the listeners how you got the role in *Blue Skies.*", suggested Greg.

When I went for the casting, and while I was waiting my turn, a woman 'accidentally' spilt coffee on my dress - maybe because she felt I would feel intimidated I expect when my turn came. But it actually worked the opposite because it gave me something to talk about - I was very chatty and precocious. So that may have helped me get the part. At that age you can't read scripts, so success depends upon how you come over. They were having a problem because they couldn't find a little girl who looked like him. They were getting kind of desperate and even thought about putting a wig on one of his boys. Then I came along and they reckoned I looked enough like him. But I guess I must look enough like a lot of movie stars to be able play their daughters! I've been in bed with so many movie legends - 'cos when you're a little girl you're always in bed! They come up and kiss you goodnight; that's always a part of the story."

"What was Bing like off camera.", asked Greg, in one of his several, relevant promptings.
"He was just a lot of fun. He played practical jokes all the time. Jerry Colonna hung around the stage; they were good friends; and Bob Hope came by and they'd all hash together. Bing was just so much fun. He'd whisper and tell me stories and little jokes. He was such a nice man. I suppose he had his moments but I never saw that side of him. He never forgot who I was - and he always called me Mary-Elizabeth. When the picture was over he sent me my wardrobe that I wore in the movie. He struck up a long relationship and took an interest in me, which he didn't have to do. While some stars were unapproachable, Bing was not like that at all. He didn't put on any airs, he was just who he was, as on the screen, that was him. One time I met him on the street at Paramount: 'Hi! Mary-Elizabeth', he called out. I went over to him and being a chatty-Kathy I was going on a bit and I told him that I'd just got a new dog and he'd howled all night long. So I named him Bing. Well, a reporter from Variety magazine was with him and it was all over the next issue. Got me in a lot of trouble!"

In watching her scene with Bing one becomes aware of unrehearsed play-acting from Karolyn - what is known in the States as 'monkeyshines'. "We just had a little chemistry going there which the director must have encouraged. There was no pressure or tension; the director was there on the sidelines telling me what to do, and Bing guiding me. It was a pleasant scene to do. It's all up to the main star; if they want to be a smart aleck and look down on you and intimidate you they can. You can't do a good job like that. But Bing made me feel great and just, well, very comfortable. I was only five years old remember.", she explained. It certainly added a naturalness to the scene as some of Bing's expressions were quite clearly a genuine reaction to Mary-Elizabeth's impish antics.

Appearing in at least sixteen films Karolyn clearly had a wonderful taste in leading men, as Greg was quick to point out. Apart from Bing they included James Stewart, Cary Grant and John Wayne. Indeed, the greater part of the interview centred around *It's A Wonderful Life* - one of the most heart-warming Christmas orientated films ever, with references, also, to *The Bishop's Wife* and *Rio Grande*. Sadly, you won't find Karolyn listed in Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion but, on the strength of her most famous role, she does have her own fan club, currently in excess of two thousand members: The Zuzu Society at P.O. Box 225, Stilwell, KS 66085, and she regularly appears on what is known as 'the grief circuit' as a speaker for groups involved in mental rehabilitation for distressed and grieving persons, as befits her role not only as the troubled George Bailey's screen daughter, but also because Karolyn lost her mother, who died when she was only fourteen years old, and her father the following year when he was killed in a car accident. But on *Blue Skies*, and Bing, the last word goes to Karolyn Grimes herself.

"I may be somewhat biased, but I feel that the music written by Irving Berlin and performed by Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire is timeless. Such dedication - real talent that you don't have today. I've kept that film in my heart because I think it is one of the most special ones I've seen. I consider Bing as one of my most famous fathers. We had a very special chemistry together and I consider it an honour to share my stories with his fans."

ROUND AND ABOUT

It has been suggested by your Editor that an overview of what's happening on the airwaves might be preferable to the slightly more detailed reviews and comments on the various presenters and their music that have appeared in this column in previous issues. One reason for this suggestion has been the excess of space taken up by Bing On The Box. Another was that in noting song titles played on the wireless there was a danger of such a listing of tunes becoming tiresome to the reader. I've tried to trace a middle course as much as possible but accept that these pages do run on a bit quite frequently. For this issue, then, I'm opting for the truncated treatment and assume that there will be some feedback from Members to assist the editorial staff in attaining the best format for this column.

In assimilating all the music that has been aired over the past four months it has become remarkably apparent that the efforts of Members is beginning to bear fruit. Beginning! A veritable harvest in fact. So much so that my NTBOB award has been diminished by becoming commonplace. Everybody gets the gong this time around, for I've not heard one playing of "Swinging On A Star", "McNamara's Band" et al in the last four months. I'm not knocking those songs - just the previous, constant repetition which must have suggested a limited, musical Crosby portfolio to the average listener. However, in more recent times the continuous supply of newly released material that is winding up on presenters' turntables has ensured a feast of Bacchanalian proportions enough to slake the thirst of the most jaded, Crosby palate as well as acquainting wireless audiences with the vast range and style of Bing's recorded career.

Bill Rennells' Harmony Night on BBC Radio Kent, Thames Valley, and Southern Counties is a typical example - a terrific catchment area. His request programme invariably features several tracks per session and finds so much to draw on from the early 'Thirties through the classic years. How rewarding to actually hear non-ICC listeners asking for the likes of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart", "The Very Thought Of You" and "Blue Shadows And White Gardenias", and I'm reliably informed by avid listener, and even more committed Crosbyphile, Ian Lawrence, that Bing is the most requested artiste on this very varied programme.

BY GEORGE!

Anna Murby scooped a mid-week, prime time interview with George O'Reilly on BBC Northampton on 21st. January during which George traced the history of his remarkable association with Bing. Initially sending Bing a bunch of shamrocks for St. Patrick's Day and receiving, by return, some autographed records (From the land blessed with an excess of that lucky emblem I feel George easily got the best deal there!) and the following year being the recipient of a telegram in the days when that kind of message meant you'd just lost a relative - or a win on the Irish Sweepstake, set George on the road to friendship with one of the Emerald Isle's most famously claimed American sons. The telegram was neither win nor lose: 'If you can make it see you in London at Savoy Hotel. Bing', it read. From that day forward it was onwards and upwards. An enviable friendship well chronicled in this magazine and reiterated on Anna's programme with a musical interlude from the *Little Bit Of Irish* compact disc, "The Isle Of Innisfree" - the CD being given away as a prize to the question; what lucky emblem did George first send to Bing?. If you 'phoned and said it was a four-leaf clover you got it wrong!

As ever the West Country contingent contribute considerably to the overall picture with Judith Ley, Anne Hopper, David Lowe and Chris Robinson being in the forefront with their imaginative variations drawn from both commercial and non-commercial sources. "Say It Isn't So", "I'm Making Believe", "Remember Me" and the utterly charming Nacio Herb Brown/Arthur Freed composition of "Would You" from 1936 are wonderful examples of what is being broadcast in the regions where westerly breezes blow strongest. I liked the comment from BBC Radio Devon's Graham Danton who remarked on his Music For You programme that Bing had never been matched for his ability to become another musical instrument within an orchestra. And how endearing to hear on David Lowe's As Time Goes By a listener requesting "The Lamplighter's Serenade" as a reminder of his 1930's childhood when the song title's kindly character's attention to the park gaslights gained the reminiscing listener and his friends of all those years ago, another couple of hours playtime before being called indoors. It is these kind of anecdotal recollections and the broadcasters comments that make most of these programmes so pleasurable to listen to. As another example, Anne Hopper, in playing the much requested

"The Anniversary Waltz" recalled Bing's visit to Cockermouth and the Trout Hotel there where a photograph of Bing proudly displaying the worthy opponent that he hooked in the turbulent eddies of the Derwent graces a wall in the lounge bar. Surely, no other artiste is responsible for conjuring so many images of time and place, and magical memories of the sights and sounds of life's rich tapestry. Trawl anywhere in the field of entertainment, and popular music particularly, the Crosby connection can always be made. Similarly, in the world of golfing, horse racing and field sports activities and, of course, that conflict: What did you do in the war, Grandad?' What, when I wasn't listening to Bing d'you mean?'

IT'S THAT SONG AGAIN

I guess, without question, the biggest talking point over the December airwaves was the re-emergence of the 1947 version of "White Christmas" as a single to the degree that it was announced on BBC Radio 1 Studio Top Forty Countdown for two successive weeks, reaching No. 29. So how many copies did you buy?! Every presenter referred to this fifty-two year old phenomenon, some with suggestions along the lines of a 'minor miracle', and all playing it of course. With its simply stated traditional gift tag sleeve this was one 'best of Bing' that could hardly be avoided over Christmas - and who would want to anyway? At £1.99 in Woolies', the bargain of the seasonal music.

DISC - CONNECTED?

A couple of other albums that found favour with the disc spinners were *More Memories* and the V-Disc set. These were kindly supplied by certain members of the ICC who readers will know of from this magazine. Of the first release two tracks stand out by the frequency of airtime afforded to them: "If You Stub Your Toe On The Moon" and "Home Cookin'", with "Oh Tell Me Why" coming in a close third. Though I suspect this latter recording's popularity arises from the novelty aspect of Bing's own 'barbershop' accompaniment. Stan White made that point when he 'phone guested on John Richards' Magical Memories. The ICC inspired sequel being the reason for Stan's airtime on the BBC Radio Lincolnshire. A good plug for the album, with both of the Dorsey brothers involved, Jimmy on "Sweet Lorraine" and Tommy providing the backing for "Without A Word Of Warning".

The mainly mid-forties V-Discs are quite unique, and of historical importance, not only for Crosby collectors but in the world of popular music generally. How fortuitous that enterprising folk took the trouble to ensure that, despite the regulations, many copies survived the mass destruction that was their intended lot! Anne Hopper weighed in with two or three tracks that included the medley from the film *Pennies From Heaven*, and took time out to explain exactly what V-Discs were. Similarly, an explanation, with examples, was forthcoming on Barnsey At The Beeb, Paul's regular weekend farrago of popular music - though "Shoo-fly pie" is not one of my favourites. It's a song of its time, of course, but I feel that this sort of material doesn't get the message across to the unenlightened. Whereas tracks from the CDs The Krafty Young Bing Volumes 1 & 2, several of which Barnsey has played, are exactly the kind of performance to make an audience sit up and listen. "Where Are You", featured for the February calendar picture, "Everything's In Rhythm With My Heart" and "Moonlight On The Ganges" - with its shades of Wilson, Kepple and Betty conclusion - this sort of material really is Gold for Grownups.

Earlier, the January calendar caused a slight problem as Bing's reputed featuring of "I'll Be Faithful" was clearly a figment of the publishers' imagination. But I'm sure Bing was happy to take the money. Fortunately, the calendar cover provided just the right solution. And I'm sneaking in here on a personal note to thank Barnsey for playing "Mary, What Are You Waiting For" for my birthday on two consecutive weeks! A couple of welcome guests on the aforementioned programme were Jack Parnell and Lenny Bush who chinned and chatted with Paul on many aspects of their careers; but had not ICC member Geoff Block drawn listeners attention to the Crosby connection in a subsequent letter to the programme, much of Barnsey's airwaves audience would have been unaware of Lenny's presence on stage at the Palladium in 1976 as part of the Joe Bushkin Quartet. Paul has promised a reunion with the two British big band stalwarts on his Norfolk based programme when this avenue of the Lenny Bush career will be explored. Sadly, it is possible that my own region -Essex - may lose Gold For Grownups because of low audience figures. How do they know and who do they ask for heaven's sake? I've never been questioned and I don't know anybody who has; and the same answer can be gleaned from anyone you speak to. Paul Barnes and his programme are a class act that should never be axed! If you listen, write and press for its retention.

THE LAST ROUND-UP

Deserving of mention here are the joint efforts of Peter Moreton and Eddie Grabam who, for weeks, have been exploring the early years of the Crosby career with both soundtrack and commercial recordings that have been a real pleasure to listen to. Broadcasting from Northampton, these two Bingophiles have displayed a knowledge and awareness of Bing's impact on the big picture scene that does them credit. Successive weeks featured s/t and songs from *Going Hollywood*, *College Humour* and *Too Much Harmony;* some of the greatest Crosby recordings ever to find their way on to wax. "Please". "Thanks", "Beautiful Girl" - I mean! And I enjoyed Peter's remarks at the conclusion of "Dinah": "The Mills Brothers, Bunny Berigan, Eddie Lang, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman - and Bing - all on one recording! You couldn't afford it could you!" Of the programme I can only say this mini-series is one you couldn't afford to miss.

Again, no Valentine card! Ah, well. Still, I did have the opportunity, via an audio cassette, to hear Christine Prentice on Greater Manchester Radio with her String Of Pearls Bing Special that was broadcast on Valentine's Day. A hour of Crosby requests from listeners in that area. Songs that spanned the years and matched the

mood of many a Lothario and faithful spouse alike. Christine was swamped with hopeful dedications, far too many to play, and intends a similar programme later in the year. Naturally, members of the ICC are on hand to help in any way they can to spread the good music to all who tune in to GMR.

Christmas Toons cartoon ("Twelve Days Of Christmas"), Top Of the Pops ("Peace On Earth/Little Drummer Boy"), Never Mind The Buzzcocks (Bing's connection with Marc Bolan - they both sang with Bowie only to die weeks afterwards), a Radio London commercial break for kiddie wear ("Jingle Bells") - and that CentreParcs ad, all featuring Cros, are some of the welcome trivia that we all like to spot; and on this occasion I'm grateful to Ron Hudson for the info. Then Ron went on to say that having booked for CentreParcs as he and his wife do, annually, they were asked, on reservation, if they liked the TV advert and if they could identify the singers. I bet they had to struggle with that one!

Bert Bishop

Keeping Track

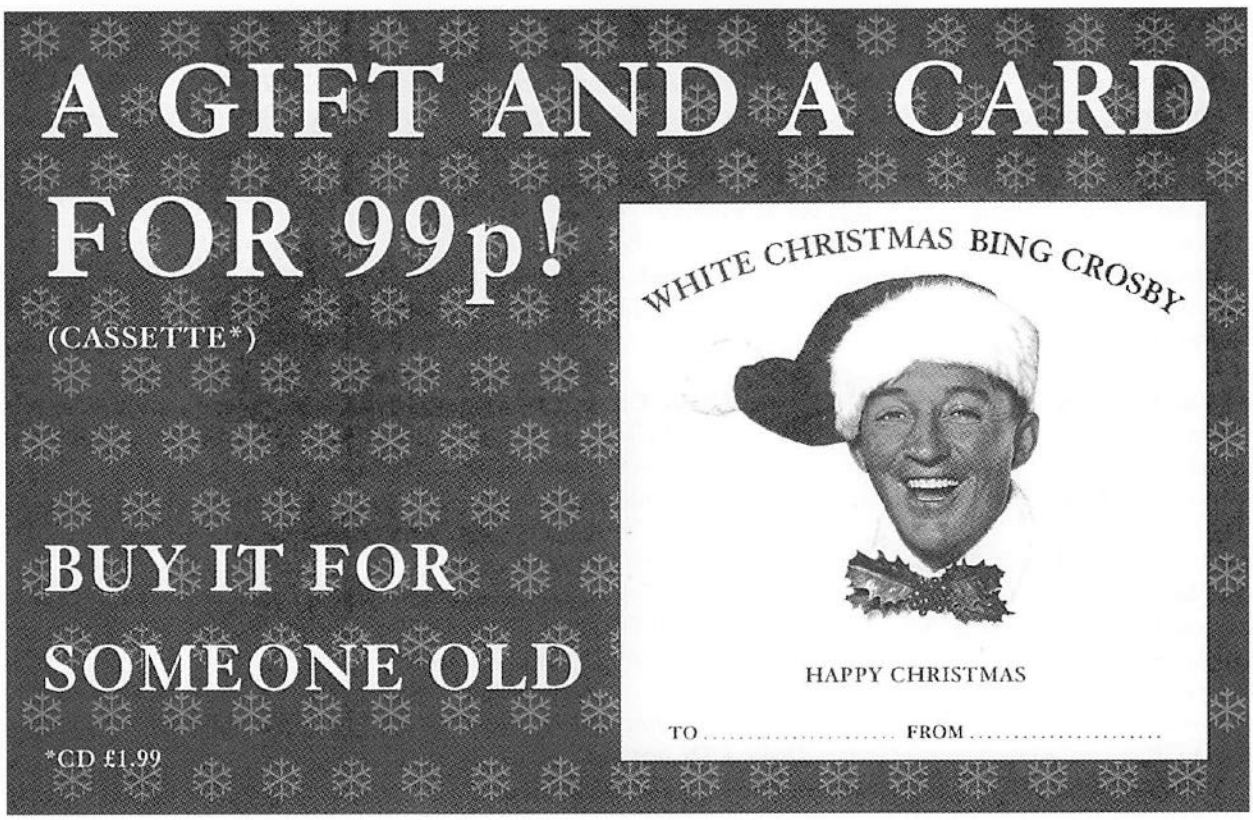
A Compact Disc Review by Jim Reilly

1998 ended on a particular high note for Bing with the perennial (and this time cleverly packaged) *White Christmas* entering the pop charts over the festive season and staying there for three consecutive weeks. The Christmas period saw more Bing CDs in the record stores than I can remember for some time (of course some were re-issues) and in all 1998 was a very prolific year for Crosby devotees. It is hoped that the trend will continue this year as we collectors have an insatiable appetite for more Bing on CD. At the time of going to press I had no information on when we can expect to see the BMG (Bing "Meets - Al, Frank or Ella") CDs. I am not sure if they will be initially available in the shops as the may be released through mail order, all I know is that we will eventually get them. If I hear anything before the next issue of BING I will let people know and hope that you will get to hear of it on the grapevine. Ken Barnes tells me that he is working on a Fred Astaire album which will contain all the 11 tracks Bing recorded with Fred plus some of their chat in the recording studios.

White Christmas Bing Crosby - Single CD **MCA MCSTD48105** **UK**

White Christmas (1947), Auld Lang Syne and PeaceOn Earth / Little Drummer Boy with David Bowie

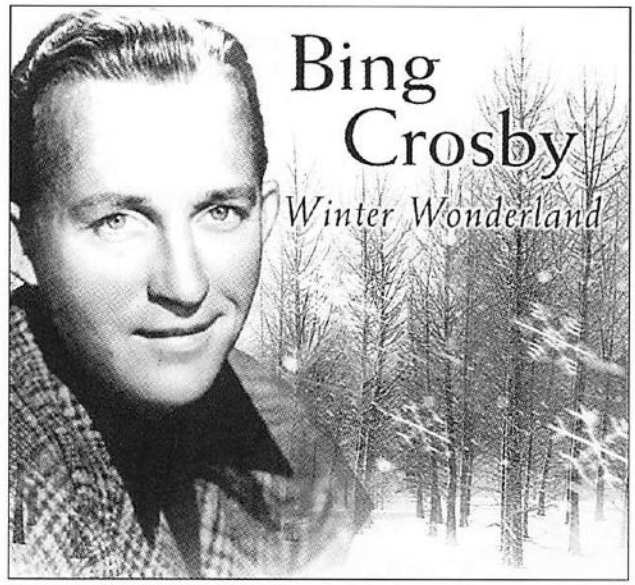
This single was originally sold for £1.99 but the price was increased to £3.99 in some shops once it had chart success. It was great to see Bing back in the charts although I didn't recognise too many of the names of the other groups or artists that had the privilege of appearing with him. I do not know if many of you know that MCA advertised the single with the slogan "Buy It For Some One Old" - it obviously worked. The single was also issued as a cassette and the advertising for this is shown below.



Winter Wonderland **EMI Records 7243 4 96829 2 4** **UK**

Winter Wonderland
Frosty The Snowman
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas
Do You Hear What I Hear
When A Child Is Born
The Littlest Angel
What Child Is This / The Holly And The Ivy
Little Drummer Boy
Children
The Way We Were
Christmas Dinner Country Style
Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow
In The Cool Cool Cool Of The Evening w Fred Astaire
Great Day
Medley: Hark The Herald Angels Sing / It Came Upon A Midnight Clear
O Holy Night
Medley: Pat-A-Pan / While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night
I Wish You A Merry Christmas

I regret that I was unable to report on this CD at the appropriate time, as it surfaced too late to be included in the last issue. This is an excellent CD that I was indeed very pleased to add to my collection. Mind you I think that EMI must have been scratching around for titles when you see 'In The Cool Cool Cool Of The Evening', 'Great Day' and 'The Way We Were' included. Nevertheless it is a very enjoyable album as it includes two of my festive favourites - 'Do You Hear What I Hear' and 'Christmas Dinner Country Style' together with other rare to CD titles. I expect that most members were able to get this CD over the festive season but for those who missed out, they may be pleased to know that I was recently still able to obtain copies locally. Running Time:51.24 Price: £6.99



White Christmas **Brisa Entertainments Cat No. 47477-2**

White Christmas, Adeste Fideles, Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer, Away In A Manger, O Little Town Of Bethlehem, Silent Night, That Christmas Feeling, Jingle Bells, Hitch A Ride With Santa Claus, The Snowman, It Came Upon A Midnight Clear, Santa Claus Is Coming To Town, The Christmas Song, Deck The Halls, Hark The Herad Angels Sing, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, O Come All Ye Faithful

This CD is sold in a tin with a nice festive picture on the lid. I have not seen it or heard it but am advised that it contains radio material and the quality is not too bad. A number of members sent me details of this particular album, but I have no idea of the price or where it can be purchased. It has been around some time as the date 1995 appears on the CD

Christmas Classics **Disky Communications CH884662** **Holland**

White Christmas
Jingle Bells*
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas
Winter Wonderland
The Little Drummer Boy
O Holy Night
Let It Snow Let It Snow Let It Snow
Frosty The Snowman
Silent Night
The Twelve Days Of Christmas*
The Littlest Angel
What Child Is This / The Holly And The Ivy
The First Noel
Hark!The Herald Angel Sing / It Came Upon A Midnight Clear
Adeste Fideles
I Wish You A Merry Christmas

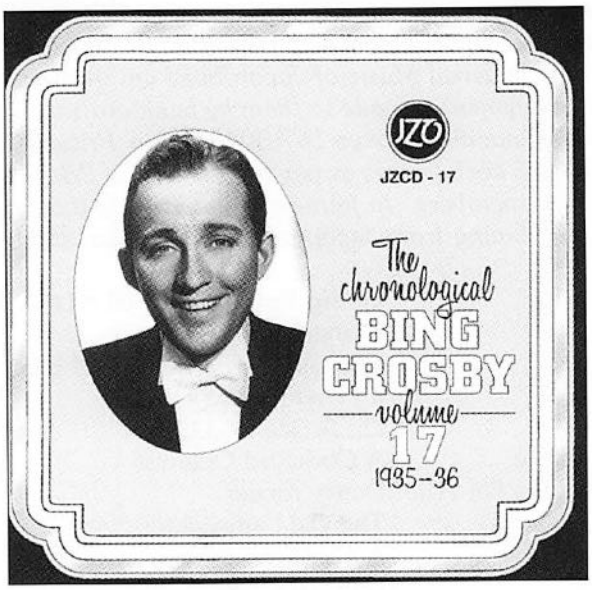
* With The Andrews Sisters

I am indebted to member Ernest Sutkowski for sending me details of this album. I can only assume that the quality is OK as my experience of other Disky CDs has been good. This CD was released in 1997 so you may have some trouble locating it and probably your best bet is to try next Christmas. Price: $10.99

The Chronological Bing Crosby **Jonzo JZCD17** **UK**

Red Sails In The Sunset
Take Me Back To My Boots And Saddle (A)
Take Me Back To My Boots And Saddle (B)
On Treasure Island (A)
On Treasure Island (B)
On Treasure Island (C)
Adeste Fideles (A)
Adeste Fideles (B)
Silent Night Holy Night (A)
Silent Night Holy Night (B)
Sailor Beware (A)
Sailor Beware (B)
My Heart And I (A)
My Heart And I (B)
Moonburn (A)
Moonburn (B)
We'll Rest At The End Of The Trail
Twilight On The Trail (A)
Twilight On The Trail (B)
Twilight On The Trail (AD)
The Touch Of Your Lips (A)
The Touch Of Your Lips (C)
Lovely Lady (A)
Lovely Lady (B)
Corrine Corrina

To me this is by far the best of all the Jonzo albums released to date as the sound quality is greatly improved and there is none of the distracting surface noise that I have reported on with previous albums. There is a nice clarity of sound throughout and I have never heard some of these titles sounding so good. I particularly like "On Treasure Island", "My Heart And I", "We'll Rest At The End Of The Trail", "The Touch Of Your Lips" and "Lovely Lady". The album has quite a number of alternate takes that are new to CD and of the other titles to my knowledge, "Lovely Lady" and "Corrine Corrina" make their debuts. This very enjoyable CD is only available in the UK and the rest of Europe from Jonzo Records PO Box 212, Harrow Middlesex HA3 7DL. Price £10.60 including pp. (or two for £21). Cheques to be made payable to Jonzo Records. USA and Canadian Members can obtain copies from Wig Wiggins (address inside front cover). Running Time: 76.14



Bing Crosby Kraft Shows **Lost Gold Records LGR7598** **USA**

Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive
There Goes That Song Again - Eugenie Baird
Runnin' Wild - Charioteers
Conversation with Duke Ellington
Frankie & Johnny -Duke Ellington
You've Got Me Where You Want Me w E. Baird
Down By The River
It's Easy To Remember
Soon
Swanee River
Sentimental Journey
All of My Life
I'm Beginning to See The Light - Eugenie Baird
Kentucky Babe w The Charioteers
If You Can't Smile and Say Yes, Please Don't Cry and Say No - King Cole Trio
Georgia Brown - King Cole Trio
Love Thy Neighbour
May I
Goodnight Lovely Little Lady

The quality of this CD is on a par with the excellent LaserLight albums of KMH shows released in 1994. The first seven titles are from the Kraft Music Hall programme of 18 January 1945 (this was included on LaserLight 12 301) and the other tracks are from the KMH of 3 May 1945 (not to my knowledge previously issued on CD, although some members might recall that the sections of the shows with Duke Ellington and the King Cole Trio were released on a very poor LP issued by Bonsard reference 601.) My main criticism of this CD however is that the sleeve liners show 18 tracks whereas when you put it on your player 30 tracks appear (it's a bit of a lucky dip trying to play a particular title). The songs from "Mississippi also include "Soon" but this is not indicated in the track listings. This is however a very enjoyable album and well worth adding to your collections, particularly for the second KMH Show. The sleeve notes are written by Stephanie Edwards, Special Collections Librarian, Gonzaga University. Running Time :57:18 Price: $13.95

Beautiful Memories (3CD Set) **Diski Communications HR853142** **Holland**
The contents are identical to the 3CD set "The Complete United Artists Sessions" 7243 8 59808 2 4 which as we all undoubtedly know is one of those marvellous Ken Barnes releases. The three CDs are supplied in individual cases housed in a card box. Price: £12.49

Bing Crosby Favorite Hawaiian Songs (2CDs) **Universal Victor Inc. Omagatoki SC-2140/1** **Japan**
Vol.1 (SC-2140) Song Of The Islands, Sweet Leilani, Blue Hawaii, In A Little Hula Heaven, South Sea Island Magic, Hawaiian Paradise, Red Sails In The Sunset, The One Rose, Moonlight And Shadows, Dancing Under The Stars, Palace In Paradise, When You Dream About Hawaii, Sail Along Silv'ry Moon, The Moon Of Manakoora, Sweet Hawaiian Chimes, Little Angel, To You Sweetheart Aloha. Running Time: 52:07

Vol.2 (SC-2041) My Isle Of Golden Dreams, A Song Of Old Hawaii, Aloha Kuu Ipo Aloha, Trade Winds, Paradise Isle, Sing Me A Song Of The Islands, Blue Shadows And White Gardenias, Remember Hawaii, Now Is The Hour, Harbour Lights, Beyond The Reef, The Singing Sands Of Alamosa, Here Ends The Rainbow, I Will Remember You, Mele Kalikimaka, Where The Blue Of The Night, Aloha Oe. Running Time: 51:53
Generally, I am disappointed with this CD as it is very nicely packaged but unfortunately it does not live up to expectations. With a good selection of 34 titles on this double album, an excellent opportunity has been missed in making it the definitive collection of Crosby Hawaiian songs. At least a third of the tracks are for me spoilt with the use of overbearing echo techniques and on most of the tracks, we have clicks and on some, there is also reverberation to contend with. There may be people out there that like the use of echo and if this is the case good luck to them but I feel that it is outdated and should be consigned to the rubbish bin. This is to my knowledge the fourth album on compact disc dedicated solely to Bing's Hawaiian repertoire and for me it is the least enjoyable. The only redeeming feature is the three titles new to CD: 'Little Angel', 'The Singing Sands Of Alamosa', and 'I Will Remember You'. The Japanese distributors do not intend to export it to any specialist importers without permission from Universal Music of Japan but I am informed that they will supply copies to individual club members if advance payment is made to them by bank draft to Omagatoki Co Ltd Dai 2 Hakusan Bldg., 14-12. 1-Chome, Kamiogi, Suginami-ku. Tokyo 167-0043 Japan Price: 1CD - $61, 2CDs - $48 each, 3CDs - $44.33 each, 4CDs or more - $39.25 each (Prices as per their e-mail of 28 December 1998). I will not become involved with purchasing this CD for members. In fairness I should state that the quality on this album is better than experienced on some CDs but coming from Japan and the Universal stable I expected much better.

Bing Crosby **Going For A Song GFS167** **UK**

PS I Love You
Ole Buttermillk Sky
I Got The Sun In The Morning
It's A Good Day
Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives To Me
When The Midnight Choo Choo Leaves For Alab.
Lady Of Spain
Maybe It's Because
Dark Moon
Everything I Have Is Yours
When The Red Red Robin Comes Bob...
Please Mr Sun
Feet Up
Pittsburgh Pennsylvania
Glow Worm

Come What May
The Girl In The Bonnet Of Blue
If I Had My Way
Zip A Dee Doo Dah
A Cockeyed Optimist
Down Yonder
The Old Lamplighter
A Thousand Violins
Now That I Need You
You Go To My Head
I Dreamt I Dwelt In Marble Halls
Great Day
If This Isn't Love
The Blacksmith Blues

Most of the material on this CD has been on compact disc many times before and is of mixed sound quality. As far as I know the only title that makes its debut on CD is 'The Girl In The Bonnet Of Blue' (shown on the CD as 'The Girl In The Alice Blue Gown') which featured in The Kraft Music Hall shows of 9 June and 7 July 1938. All the material is of course from radio - of the 29 tracks no less than 24 appeared on the album "Everything I Have Is Yours" (omitted were 'When The Midnight Choo Choo Leaves For Alabam', 'When The Red Red Robin Comes Bob-Bob-Bobin' Along', 'The Girl In The Bonnet Of Blue', 'If I Had My Way' and 'I Dreamt I Dwelt In Marble Halls'). You may be able to find this one in the shops but if not Mr P Blakely, Delta Discounts, Oakleigh House, Ruiffa Lane, Pickering, YO18 7NH can supply copies: Price: £4.00 Running Time: 67:17

Bing Crosby 1928-1945 **L'art Vocal Volume 20** **France**

O'l Man River
Out Of Nowhere
Just One More Chance
Stardust
Where The Blue Of The Night

Pennies From Heaven
You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby
The Waiter And The Porter And The Upstairs Maid
Sing Me A Song Of The Islands
White Christmas

Sweet Georgia Brown
Please
I've Got The World On A String
Love Is Just Around The Corner
Pennies From Heaven
Moonlight Becomes You
San Fernando Valley
Swinging On A Star
On The Atcheson Topeka And Santa Fe
Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive

Michael Crampton sent me details of this album but to date I have not got my hands on a copy. Michael tells me that the quality is good although there is nothing new to CD. My local contacts tell me that they should be able to get copies of this CD Price: £10.99

Memories Of Yester Years Volume 14 - Heart & Soul **Samba MTLCD5064** **UK**

From The Vine, Candy & Cake, That Old Gang Of Mine, Easter Parade, You're A Grand Old Flag, A Friend Of Yours, When You Were Sweet Sixteen, Marta, Hoop & Holler, I'll Walk Alone

This is yet another album that has been around since 1997 but has only just become known to me. I am indebted to Les Brice, Leslie Gaylor and Etty Gits for giving me details of this CD. The quality of this radio material is rather varied with some strange noises on a couple of tracks. Unusually, some copies of this CD were sold in a plastic bag without a case, whereas the copy Leslie Gaylor had was in a proper jewel case. I am sorry that I can't advise where to obtain the CD but understand the price in the USA was $1.99. Running time: 22.19

GUEST APPEARANCES

Rosemary Clooney Memories Of You (7CD set & Book) **Bear Family Records BCD 15914-GK** **Germany**

The one track featuring Crosby is the rare title "Music to Shave By" and this I would think is its first airing on CD. Most members may well recall that Bing sang this on a promo record for Roll-a-matic Shavers that also featured Rosemary Clooney, Louis Armstrong and the Hi-los. It is such a pity that this collection is so expensive as this will prohibit most of our members ever contemplating purchasing it. This set was released in August of last year but I only learnt of its existence after we went to press for the winter issue of BING. The information regarding this set was provided by members Brian Henson and Etty Gits. Price: DM250.00 - say £88 (as advised by Etty Gits)

There is one more set scheduled in this series of Rosemary Clooney Box sets and this will include all of Rosie's commercial duets with Bing on RCA and Capitol.

Note: Members might well be interested to learn that Rosie was honoured by the Society of Singers as last year's recipient of the Ella Award for services to the Industry. I would like to thank Brian Henson for providing this information. Also Greg Van Beek tells me via the Internet that Rosie was interviewed on Tom Snyder's 'Late Late Show' on CBS-TV in February and she talked about Bing often during the interview, calling him her best duet partner. She said that their voices were so much alike and blended so well that they could pick the song keys for one another. She also talked about making 'White Christmas' and how Bing was always on time on the set (arriving 15 minutes early most of the time).

The Best Of Evelyn Knight **Collectors' Choice Music CCM-063-2** **USA**

20 Tracks (2 Bing) 'How It Lies How It Lies How It Lies' and 'Everywhere You Go'

I must admit that until I obtained this album, I hadn't given Evelyn Knight much of a thought. I of course knew of the two Bing titles that appear on the album, but had not realised that she had such a good singing voice. I can now understand why she was known as "The Lass with the Delicate Air". This is a thoroughly enjoyable album and I particularly like Evelyn's versions of "Dance With The Dolly With A Hole In Her Stocking", "Buttons And Bows" and "Cock-Eyed Optimist". I also enjoyed the two duets with Dick Haymes "Blind Date" and "Say When". Other well known songs included are "Chickery Chick", "A Little Bird Told Me", "It's Too Late Now", "Candy And Cake" and "Lucky Lucky Lucky Me" Running Time:55.37 Price: £13.50 - The Record Centre, 45-46 Loveday St. Birmingham B4 6NR (phone:0121-359-7399)- may be able to supply this one.

VIDEO NEWS

Hollywood Musical Shorts Radio Rhythms **Visual Entertainment PAL VSL10042** **UK**

The video contains 8 Shorts including 'I Surrender Dear' directed by Mack Sennett. The note on the sleeve says "This film was used as a vehicle to test the cinematic talents of emerging radio star Bing Crosby". Other appearances on the video include Rudy Vallee, Ruth Etting. Helen Kane, Lillian Roth, Hoagy Carmichael and Betty Boop. This video is one of a series of four and two other Sennett shorts appear on these. Approximate Running Time: 83Minutes Price: £12.99

A Bing Crosby Christmas (As shown in the last issue of BING)

A number of members have asked where this can be purchased and I think that I should point out that it is in fact the American version of **A Bing Crosby Christmas - Like The Ones We Used To Know** VCI VC4137 that was issued in 1997.

In addition to my reviews I have also been working on a publication on behalf of the ICC entitled "The Bing Crosby Information File" and I hope that by the time you are reading these notes that you will be in possession of a copy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Malcolm Macfarlane and Wig Wiggins for their kind help in the preparation of this booklet. My thanks are also due to those members who have recently sent me details of CDs. Good listening to all until next time

Jim Reilly

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